BISHOP G. MOTT WILLIAMS
MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN

John Lawrence Bogart

From Hal Ashbrook August 23, 19

TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

BY

MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

VOL. II.

FOR

1834-5.

"If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

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ADVERTISEMENT.

In completing the second volume of a publication, to which the circumstances of the day have given rise, it may be right to allude to a change which has taken place in them since the date of its commencement. At that time, in consequence of long security, the attention of members of our Church had been but partially engaged in ascertaining the grounds of their adherence to it; but the imminent peril to which all that is dear to them has since been exposed, has naturally turned their thoughts that way, and obliged them to defend it on one or other of the principles which are usually put forward on its behalf. Discussions have thus been renewed in various quarters, on points which had long remained undisturbed; and, though numbers continue undecided in opinion, or take up a temporary position in some one of the hundred middle points which may be assumed between the two main theories in which the question issues, and others, again, have deliberately entrenched themselves in the modern or ultra-protestant alternative, yet, on the whole, there has been much hearty and intelligent adoption, and much respectful study, of those more primitive views maintained by our great Divines. As the altered state of public information and opinion has a necessary bearing on the efforts of those who desire to excite attention to the subject, (in which number the writers of these Tracts are to be included,) it will not be inappropriate briefly to state in this place, what it is conceived is the present position of the great body of Churchmen with reference to it.

While we have cause to be thankful for the sounder and

more accurate language which is now very generally adopted among well-judging men on ecclesiastical subjects, we must beware of over-estimating what has been done, and so becoming sanguine in our hopes of success, or slackening our exertions to secure it. Many more persons, doubtless, have taken up a profession of the main doctrine in question, that, namely, of the One Catholic and Apostolic Church, than fully enter into it. This is to be expected, it being the peculiarity of all religious teaching, that words are imparted before ideas. A child learns his Creed or Catechism before he understands it; and in beginning any deep subject we are all but children to the end of our lives. The instinctive perception of a rightly instructed mind, the *primâ facie* force of the argument, or the authority of our celebrated writers, have all had their due and extensive influence in furthering the reception of the doctrine, when once it was openly maintained; to which must be added the prospect of the loss of state protection, which made it necessary to look out for other reasons for adherence to the Church besides that of obedience to the civil magistrate. Nothing, which has spread quickly, has been received thoroughly. Doubtless there are a number of seriously-minded persons, who think they admit the doctrine in question much more fully than they do, and who would be startled at seeing that realized in particulars, which they confess in an abstract form. Many there are who do not at all feel that it is capable of a practical application: and, while they bring it forward on special occasions, in formal expositions of faith, or in answer to a direct interrogatory, let it slip from their minds almost entirely in their daily conduct or their religious teaching, from the long and inveterate habit of thinking and acting without it. We must not then at all be surprised at finding, that to modify the principles and motives on which men act is not the work of a day; nor at undergoing disappointments, at witnessing relapses, misconceptions, sudden disgusts, and, on the other hand, abuses and perversions of the true doctrine, in the case of those who have taken it up with greater warmth than discernment.

And in the next place, it will be found, that much more has been done in awakening Churchmen to the truth of the Apostolical Commission as a fact, and to the admission of it as a duty, than to the enjoyment of it as a privilege. If asked what is the use of adhering to the Church, they will commonly answer, that it is commanded, that all acts of obedience meet with their reward from Almighty God, and this in the number; but the notion of the Church as the storehouse and direct channel of grace, as a Divine Ordinance, not merely to be maintained for order's sake, or because schism is a sin, but to be approached joyfully and expectantly as a definite instrument, or rather the appointed means, of spiritual blessings,—as an Ordinance which conveys secret strength and life to every one who shares in it, unless there be some actual moral impediment in his own mind,—this is a doctrine which as yet is but faintly understood among us. Nay, our subtle Enemy has so contrived, that by affixing to this blessed truth the stigma of Popery, numbers among us are effectually deterred from profiting by a gracious provision, intended for the comfort of our faith, but in their case wasted.

The particular deficiency here alluded to may also be described by referring to another form under which it shows itself, viz. the *à priori* reluctance in those who believe the Apostolical Commission, to appropriate to it the power of consecrating the Lord's Supper; as if there were some antecedent improbability in God's gifts being lodged in particular observances, and distributed in a particular way; and as if the strong wish, or moral worth, of the individual could create in the outward ceremony a virtue which it had not received from above. Rationalistic, or (as they may be more properly called) carnal notions concerning the Sacraments, and, on the other hand, a superstitious apprehension of resting in them, and a slowness to believe the possibility of God's having literally blessed ordinances with invisible power, have, alas! infected a large mass of men in our communion. There are those whose "word will eat as doth a canker;" and it is to be feared, that we have been over-near certain celebrated Protestant teachers, Puritan or Latitudi-

narian, and have suffered in consequence. Hence we have almost embraced the doctrine, that God conveys grace only through the instrumentality of the mental energies, that is, through faith, prayer, active spiritual contemplations, or (what is called) communion with God, in contradiction to the primitive view, according to which the Church and her Sacraments are the ordained and direct visible means of conveying to the soul what is in itself supernatural and unseen. For example, would not most men maintain, on the first view of the subject, that to administer the Lord's Supper to infants, or to the dying and apparently insensible, however consistently pious and believing in their past lives, must be, under all circumstances, and in every conceivable case, a superstition? and yet neither practice is without the sanction of primitive usage. And does not this account for the prevailing indisposition to admit that Baptism conveys regeneration? Indeed, this may even be set down as the essence of Sectarian Doctrine, (however its mischief may be restrained or compensated, in the case of individuals,) to consider faith, and not the Sacraments, as the proper instrument of justification and other gospel gifts; instead of holding, that the grace of Christ comes to us altogether from without, (as from Him, so through externals of His ordaining,) faith being but the *sine quâ non*, the necessary condition on our parts for duly receiving it.

It has been with the view of meeting this cardinal deficiency (as it may be termed) in the religion of the day, that the Tract on Baptism, contained in the latter half of this volume, has been inserted; which is to be regarded, not as an inquiry into one single or isolated doctrine, but as a delineation, and serious examination of a modern system of theology, of extensive popularity and great speciousness, in its elementary and characteristic principles.

Oxford.
The Feast of All Saints, 1835.

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TO THE BINDER.

In binding, the Notes on the Tract on Baptism, to which no number is attached, must be put *next* to No. 69.

TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

THE VISIBLE CHURCH.

LETTER IV.

I AM sorry my delay has been so considerable in answering your remarks on my Letters on the Church. Indeed it has been ungrateful in me, for you have given me an attention unusual with the multitude of religious persons; who, instead of receiving the arguments of others in simplicity and candour, seem to have a certain number of types, or measures of professing Christians, set up in their minds, to one or other of which they consider every one they meet with belongs, and who, accordingly, directly they hear an opinion advanced, begin to consider whether the speaker be a No. 1, 2, or 3, and having rapidly determined this, treat his views with consideration or disregard, as it may be. I am far from saying our knowledge of a person's character and principles should not influence our judgment of his arguments; certainly it should have great weight. I consider the cry "measures not men," to be one of the many mistakes of the day. At the same time there is surely a contrary extreme, the fault of fancying we can easily look through men, and *understand* what each individual is; an arbitrary classing of the whole Christian family under but two or three *countenances*, and mistaking one man's doctrine for another's. You at least have not called me an Arminian, or a high Churchman, or a Borderer, or one of this or that school, and so dismissed me.

To pass from this subject. You tell me that in my zeal in advocating the doctrine of the Church Catholic and Apostolic, I

"use expressions and make assumptions which imply that the Dissenters are without the pale of salvation." So let me explain myself on these points.

You say that my doctrine of the one Catholic Church in effect excludes Dissenters, nay, Presbyterians, from salvation. Far from it. Do not think of me as of one who makes theories for himself in his closet, who governs himself by book-maxims, and who, as being secluded from the world, has no temptation to let his sympathies for individuals rise against his abstract positions, and can afford to be hard-hearted, and to condemn by wholesale the multitudes in various sects and parties whom he never saw. I have known those among Presbyterians whose piety, resignation, cheerfulness, and affection, under trying circumstances, have been such, as to make me say to myself, on the thoughts of my own higher privileges, "Woe unto thee Chorazin, woe unto thee Bethsaida!" Where little is given, little will be required; and that return, though little, has its own peculiar loveliness, as an acceptable sacrifice to Him who singled out for praise the widow's two mites. Was not Israel apostate from the days of Jeroboam; yet were there not even in the reign of Ahab, seven thousand souls who were "reserved," an elect remnant? Does any Churchman wish to place the Presbyterians, where, as in Scotland, their form of Christianity is in occupation, in a worse condition under the Gospel than Ephraim held under the Law? Had not the ten tribes the schools of the Prophets, and has not Scotland at least the word of God? Yet what would be thought of the Jew who had maintained that Jeroboam and his kingdom were in no guilt? and shall we, from a false charity, from a fear of condemning the elect seven thousand, scruple to say that Presbyterianism has severed itself from our temple privileges, and undervalue the line of Levi and the house of Aaron? Consider our Saviour's discourse with the woman of Samaria. While by conversing with her He tacitly condemned the Jews' conduct in refusing to hold intercourse with the Samaritans, yet He plainly declared that "salvation was of the Jews." "Ye worship ye know not what;" He says, "we know what we worship." Can we conceive His making light of the differences between Jew and Samaritan?

Further, if to whom much is given, of him much will be required, how is it safe for us to make light of our privileges, if we have them? is not this to reject the birth-right? to hide our talent under a napkin? When we say that God has done more for us than for the Presbyterians, this indeed *may* be connected with feelings of spiritual pride; but it need not. We may, by so saying, provoke ourselves to jealousy; for we dare not deny that, in spite of our peculiar privileges of communion with Christ, yet even higher saints *may* lie hid (to our great shame) among those who have not themselves the certainty of our especial approaches to His glorious majesty. Was not Elijah sent to a widow of Sarepta? did not Elisha cure Naaman? and are not these instances set forward by our Lord Himself as warnings to us "not to be high-minded but to fear;" and, again, as a gracious consolation when we think of our less favoured brethren? Where is the narrowness of view and feeling which you impute to me? Why may I not speak out, in order at once to admonish myself, and to attempt to reclaim to a more excellent way those who are at present severed from the true Church.

And what has here been said of an established Presbyterianism, is true (in its degree) of dissent, when it has become hereditary, and embodied in institutions.

Further, it is surely parallel with the order of Divine Providence that there should be a variety, a sort of graduated scale, in His method of dispensing His favour in Christ. So far from its being a strange thing that Protestant sects are not "in Christ," in the same fulness that we are, it is more accordant to the scheme of the world that they should lie between us and heathenism. It would be strange if there were but two states, one absolutely of favour, one of disfavour. Take the world at large, one form of paganism is better than another. The North American Indians are theists, and as such more privileged than polytheists. Mahometanism is a better religion than Hindooism. Judaism is better than Mahometanism. One may believe that long established dissent affords to such as are born and bred in it a sort of pretext, and is attended with a portion of blessing, (where there is no means of knowing better,) which does not attach to those who *cause* divisions, found sects, or wantonly wander from the Church

to the Meeting House;—that what is called an orthodox sect has a share of Divine favour, which is utterly withheld from heresy. I am not speaking of the next world, where we shall all find ourselves as individuals, and where there will be but two states, but of existing bodies or societies. On the other hand, why should the corruptions of Rome lead us to deny her Divine privileges, when even the idolatry of Judah did not forfeit hers, annul her temple-sacrifice, or level her to Israel?

I say all this, merely, for the purpose of suggesting to those who are "weak," some idea of possible modes in which Eternal Wisdom may reconcile the exuberance of His mercy in CHRIST to the whole race of man, with the placing of it in its fulness in a certain ordained society and ministry. For myself I prefer to rely upon the simple word of truth, of which Scripture is the depository, and since CHRIST has told me to preach the *whole* counsel of God, to do so fearlessly and without doubting; not being careful to find ways of smoothing strange appearances in His counsels, and of obviating difficulties, being aware on the one hand that His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor our ways His ways, and on the other, that He is ever justified in His sayings, and overcomes when He is judged.

OXFORD,
The Feast of All Saints.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

BISHOP WILSON'S MEDITATIONS ON HIS SACRED OFFICE.

No. 4.—WEDNESDAY.

Question from the office of Consecration.—WILL YOU DENY ALL UNGODLINESS AND WORLDLY LUSTS, AND LIVE SOBERLY, RIGHTEOUSLY, AND GODLY, IN THIS PRESENT WORLD, THAT YOU MAY SHOW YOURSELF IN ALL THINGS AN EXAMPLE OF GOOD WORKS UNTO OTHERS, THAT THE ADVERSARY MAY BE ASHAMED, HAVING NOTHING TO SAY AGAINST YOU?—*Ans.* I WILL SO DO, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

1 Cor. ix, 27. "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." And if Paul, what shall be said of us?

Gal. v. 24. "They, that are CHRIST's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Nature is content with a little, grace with less.

Tit. ii. 15. "Let no man despise thee;" that is, demean thyself agreeable to the authority which thou hast received from JESUS CHRIST, not making thy office contemptible by any mean action; but act with the dignity of one who stands in the place of GOD.

Lev. iv. 3. "If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people, then let him bring a sin-offering." N.B. That the same sin, in a single priest, is to have as great a sacrifice as a sin of the whole people of Israel. The flesh never thrives but at the cost of the soul. Let us ever remember, that mortification must go further than the body. Self-love, pride, envy, jealousy, hatred, malice, avarice, ambition, must all be mortified, by avoiding and ceasing from the occasions of them.

The sobriety of the soul consists in humility, and in being content with necessaries.

Matt. vii. 14. "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." But, if the difficulties of an holy life affright us, let us consider, "who can dwell with everlasting burnings?" All mankind being under the sentence of death, certain to be executed, and at an hour we know not of, a state of penance and self-denial, of being dead and crucified to the world, is certainly the most suitable, the most becoming temper that we can be found in, when that sentence comes to be executed, that is, when we come to die.

The more we deny ourselves, the freer we shall be from sin, and the more dear to God. God appoints us to sufferings, that we may keep close to Him, and that we may value the sufferings of His Son, which we should have but a low notion of, did not our own experience teach us what it is to suffer. Had there been any better, any easier way to heaven, Jesus Christ would have chosen it for Himself and for His followers.

Take up the Cross.

This is designed as a peculiar favour to Christians, as indeed are all Christ's commands. Miseries are the unavoidable portion of fallen man. All the difference is, Christians suffering in obedience to the will of God, it makes them easy; unbelievers suffer the same things, but with an uneasy will and mind.....Self-denial is absolutely necessary to prepare us to receive the grace of God; it was absolutely necessary that John the Baptist should prepare the way, by preaching repentance and self-denial. Men need not be at pains to go to hell; if they will not deny themselves, if they make no resistance, they will go there of course. One does not begin to fall, when the fall becomes sensible. "They that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." This is the only true test of being truly Christians.....Every day deny yourself some satisfaction; your *eyes*, objects of mere curiosity; your *tongue*, every thing that may feed vanity, or vent enmity; the *palate*, dainties; the *ears*, flattery, and whatever corrupts the heart; the *body*, ease and luxury; bearing all the inconveniences of life, (for the love of God,) cold, hunger, restless

nights, ill health, unwelcome news, the faults of servants, contempt, ingratitude of friends, malice of enemies, calumnies, our own failings, lowness of spirits, the struggle in overcoming our corruptions; bearing all these with patience and resignation to the will of God. Do all this as unto God, with the greatest privacy ..... It being much more easy to prevent than to mortify a lust, a prudent Christian will set a guard upon his senses. One unguarded look betrayed David. Job made a covenant with his eyes. Evil communications corrupt good manners. Sensuality unfits us for the joys of heaven. If that concupiscence which opposes virtue be lessened, a less degree of grace will secure innocence .....

Self-love would wish to be made perfect at once; but self-love is what God would destroy by a course of wholesome trials. Our disorder is an excessive love for ourselves, and for this world. God orders or permits a train of events to cure us of this self-love. The cure is painful, but it is necessary. We suffer from His love. He is a Father, and cannot take pleasure in our misery ..... All ways are indifferent to one who has Heaven in his eye. He that does not practise the duty of self-denial, does not put himself into the way to receive the grace of God.....

Virtues of a Holy Life.

Fervency in devotion; frequency in prayer; aspiring after the love of God continually; striving to get above the world and the body; loving silence and solitude, as far as one's condition will permit; humble and affable to all; patient in suffering affronts and contradictions; glad of occasions of doing good even to enemies; doing the will of God, and promoting His honour to the utmost of one's power; resolving never to offend Him willingly, for any temporal pleasure, profit, or loss. These are virtues highly pleasing to God. There is no pleasure comparable to the not being captivated to any external thing whatever ..... Always suspect yourself, when your inclinations are strong and importunate. It is necessary that we deny ourselves in little and indifferent things, when reason and conscience, which is the voice of God, suggests it to us, as ever we hope to get the rule over our own will. Say not, it is a trifle, and not fit to make a sacri-

fice of to God. He that will not sacrifice a little affection, will hardly offer a greater. It is not the thing, but the reason and manner of doing it, viz. for God's sake, and that I may accustom myself to obey His voice, that God regards, and rewards with greater degrees of grace. *(Life of Mr. Bonnell, p. 122.)*

Rom. xv. 3. "Even Jesus Christ pleased not Himself;" as appears in the meanness of His birth, relations, form of a servant, the company He kept, His life, death, &c. . . . . They who imagine that self-denial intrenches upon our liberty, do not know that it is this only that can make us free indeed, giving us the victory over ourselves, setting us free from the bondage of our corruption, enabling us to bear afflictions (which will come one time or other), to foresee them without amazement, enlightening the mind, sanctifying the will, and making us to slight those baubles, which others so eagerly contend for.

Mortification consists in such a sparing use of the creatures, as may deaden our love for them, and make us even indifferent in the enjoyment of them. This lessens the weight of concupiscence, which carries us to evil, and so makes the grace of God more effectual to turn the balance of the will. *(Norris's Christian Prudence, p. 300.)*

(To be continued.)

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

In referring to Scripture for the proof of points relating to the doctrine of the Church, we sometimes find the force of our arguments evaded by the objection that, although the texts and passages we refer to seem to prove the points for which they are cited, we still appear to be giving them an undue prominence in our system. It is admitted, for instance, that the Epistles to Timothy and Titus prove an Episcopal form of Church government: that certain passages in the First Epistle to the Corinthians indicate the existence of a certain order of Church service, &c.; but then these passages are thought to occupy a subordinate place in the records of the New Testament, while our doctrine of the Church would put them prominently forward. This is, doubtless, a point to be well considered; for the apostolic rules of Scripture teaching and interpretation, must be faithfully observed: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," or "prophesy," let him prophesy "according to the proportion (or analogy) of faith."

Now, to meet this difficulty, let it be considered that the restoration of a doctrine so evidently important in its bearings as that of the Church, must necessarily produce a great change upon a system out of which it has been lost. We have been accustomed to a Ptolemaic theory of our spiritual system; we have made our own little world the centre, and have ranged the doctrines of Scripture around it, according to the relation they seem severally to bear to our own individual profit. We find ourselves called upon to adopt an opposite theory; to take for the centre of our

system a body which we had been used to regard as a mere satellite attending upon our own orb. No wonder if we feel our notions deranged; if every thing seems put into a new place; that which before was primary, now made subordinate; and *vice versâ*. This is no more than we might naturally expect: the only question for us to settle is this; does the theory which is proposed for our acceptance bring facts to support it? The maintainer of the Copernican theory, perhaps, directs our attention principally, or even exclusively, to objects which we had else comparatively neglected, or entirely overlooked. But this is no fatal objection to his views. The satellites of Jupiter might seem to hold a subordinate place in the solar system, and their eclipses to be comparatively uninteresting phenomena: and yet the examination of them led, we know, to great and important discoveries. Just so, some apparently insignificant text, lying in the depth of Scripture, far removed, as we think, from the centre light of Christian doctrine, may be the means of suggesting to us most important considerations,—of impressing upon us the conviction that we have been going upon a false theory, and leading us to a truer notion of the system in which we are placed. We do well, indeed, to weigh carefully the meaning of the texts which are brought before us, and to examine the deductions which are founded upon them, whether they follow naturally from the premises. But we do not well if we allow ourselves to be prejudiced against the evidence which is brought from Scripture, merely because it is contrary to our pre-conceived notions; because it seems to put us in a strange country, exalting the valleys, and making low the mountains and hills, turning Lebanon into a fruitful field, and causing the fruitful field to be counted, in comparison, as a forest. This is not to inquire after truth in the spirit of true philosophers, or, which is the same thing, of little children. And for such only is knowledge in store; "of such" only "is the kingdom of heaven."

For illustration of these remarks I would refer to the passages in St. Matthew's Gospel, which are first pressed upon our notice, when our attention is turned to the evidence of Scripture respecting the nature and office of the Christian Church. First and foremost, of course, is the well known promise to St. Peter,

(chap. xvi. 18.) "Upon this rock will I build my Church." It is argued by the Churchman, that the obvious sense of the word Ἐκκλησία (*Assembly*), as it would strike an unprejudiced reader, is that of a visible body; and that this sense is confirmed by the use of the term in chap. xviii. 17. Again, we are referred to the remarkable passage, (chap. xxiv. 45—51.) "Who then is that faithful and wise servant, whom his LORD shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season. Blessed is that servant whom his LORD, when He cometh, shall find so doing," &c. It is asked whether we do not find traces here of a line of ministry to continue in CHRIST's "Church" and "household" until His coming again. And we are bidden to compare with this passage that final promise of our LORD to his Apostles, with which the Gospel concludes, (chap. xxviii. 20.) "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," as confirming the proof of an uninterrupted succession of the Apostolical ministry. From these passages, then, put together, we seem to derive some idea of the Church as a visible Spiritual Society formed by CHRIST Himself; a household over which He has appointed his servants to be stewards and rulers to the end. But then this view is drawn from what might seem a few insulated passages, occurring in a Gospel which we have been accustomed to look to for what we think more practical truths. And how do they affect us? We do not like to have our minds called off to such *external* relations. The interpretation offered us of these passages, seems, indeed, correct, and the argument grounded on them legitimate: but after all they are but a few scattered passages, referring to points which we consider of inferior importance, and not entitled to have so much stress laid upon them, or to be made foundations of a system.

But now, discarding prejudice and theory, let us calmly and teachably take up the Gospel of St. Matthew, in the hope, by diligently comparing of spiritual things with spiritual, to obtain an insight into its true meaning. Let us take the passage first referred to. The promise is made to St. *Peter*: it may be well, therefore, to look through the Gospel, and collect the scattered notices of this Apostle. We shall thus ascertain whether the promise would seem to have been made to St. Peter individually,

as the Romanist would argue, or whether, as Churchmen in England would say, it was made to him as the representative of the Apostolic body, and so the type of the Christian ministry. Or, on the other hand, we shall see whether the mention of St. Peter in this passage, and the prominent place which seems in it to be given him, stand so completely alone that it cannot be wrought into any thing like a regular system.

Now if we look carefully into St. Matthew's Gospel, we seem to find, throughout, a peculiar place occupied by St. Peter. In chap. xiv. we have the narrative of the strength and weakness of his faith, in walking on the water to go to Jesus; a circumstance not related by any other of the Evangelists. In the next chapter we find Peter asking for an explanation of our Saviour's "parable" respecting the things which defile a man, and the "blind leaders of the blind," who had been offended at the saying (xv. 15). In chap. xvi. is the promise under our consideration, and the offence which so soon followed, and called down upon him his Master's displeasure. In chap. xvii. we have the story of the tribute money, and that discourse of our Lord with St. Peter which seems to have given rise to the disciples' question, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Again, in chap. xviii. when our Lord has been explaining to his disciples how the offending brother is to be dealt with by "the Church," (ver. 17.) and has confirmed to *them* the solemn declaration before made to St. Peter, (which shows in what sense it was made in the first instance to St. Peter,) "Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven," &c., we read, "Then came *Peter* to him, and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" In chap. xix. we find him anxiously inquiring of his Lord, what reward should be given to himself and his fellow-apostles, who had forsaken all and followed Him. The answer is the remarkable and solemn promise to the Twelve, which this Evangelist alone records in this place: "Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Throughout St. Matthew's Gospel, St. Peter seems to be put forward in a very peculiar manner, of which,

however we are scarcely aware until we compare the other Evangelists, and observe the difference between them in their selection and arrangement of the events they record. This is, however, too extensive a subject to enter upon at present. Our only object is to suggest the inquiry, whether there is not something more than casual in the prominent place which St. Peter occupies in St. Matthew's Gospel, and whether this peculiarity does not imply the existence of some deeper meaning than we should at first sight attach to several apparently insulated passages, in the centre of which stands the noble confession in the sixteenth chapter, and the gracious and glorious promise which was founded upon it.

In that promise, made by our LORD to St. Peter, it is said, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Here we find an expression which is of very common occurrence in St. Matthew, and peculiar to his Gospel: no other Evangelist employs the phrase, "the kingdom of heaven." Here again we shall do well to collect together the various passages in which the expression is used; and then we shall see that the doctrine of the Church and its Ministers, unfolded in the promise to St. Peter, is no insulated and subordinate point in St. Matthew's Gospel. In the beginning of the Gospel we find the Baptist preaching and saying, "Repent ye, for *the kingdom of heaven* is at hand;" and the ministry of our blessed LORD, taking up the Baptist's message, opens with the same announcement. "From that time (the time that John was cast into prison) JESUS began to preach and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (iv. 17.) We read of his going about all the synagogues of Galilee, "preaching the Gospel of the kingdom" (iv. 23.); and in His Sermon on the Mount we hear Him declaring who they are to whom that kingdom belongs, (v. 3, &c.) "The kingdom of heaven" was to be the fulfilment of the earlier dispensation, the law and the prophets; "whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments," says our blessed LORD, "and shall *teach* men so, the same shall be called the least in *the kingdom of heaven;* but whosoever shall do and *teach* them, the same shall be called great in *the kingdom of heaven.* For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteous-

ness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (v. 17—19.) This, with other parallel passages, seems to give us a clue to the view of the Gospel dispensation as unfolded by St. Matthew. Our LORD appears in the character of a prophet, like Moses, raised up to be the Giver of a new law, and the Founder of a new Kingdom or Polity. The Scribes and Pharisees were corrupt expounders of the Divine law, they were unfaithful stewards of the mysteries of the kingdom: other servants were therefore to be chosen into their place, who should be the true "light of the world;" faithful rulers over GOD's household, giving to every one their portion of meat in due season. The Scribes and Pharisees were to be deposed from Moses's seat; St. Peter and his fellow apostles were to be exalted in their room. They had "the keys of knowledge" committed to them, to open the kingdom of heaven unto men; but they had abused their trust, and they were to be deprived of their sacred office. Thus does our LORD pass sentence upon them: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye *shut up the kingdom of heaven against men:* for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." And thus, in terms strictly corresponding, as it would appear, is their bishopric given for another to take: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; and I say unto thee, that thou art Peter; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." The kingdom of heaven, of which the keys were thus taken away from the Scribes and Pharisees, and given to St. Peter and his brethren, was that everlasting kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, which had been committed to the SON by the Almighty FATHER. To Him of proper right it belongs; of Him alone it is properly said, that "He openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." "The law and the prophets were until John," He himself declares: since that time the kingdom of GOD is preached, and every man presseth into it. "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." (Luke xvi. 16. Matt. xi. 12.) For the baptism of repentance for

the remission of sins was then first preached to sinners. The Son of Man had power upon earth to forgive sins (ix. 6.); and He had also power to retain them: He was empowered to gather the wheat into his garner, and to burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire (iii. 12). But when, as the Messenger of the Covenant, He came, in fulfilment of prophecy, to visit His temple, and to punish the priests who had corrupted the covenant, and been partial in the law, He came, at the same time, to "purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver," that they might "offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness." Let us bear this prophecy in mind when we turn to St. Matthew's Gospel, and let us see whether the long vista of GOD's dispensations in reference to his elder "church" and household, the covenant made with his ministers, the promises given to them, their unfaithfulness and corruption, will not throw a new light upon many passages of the Gospel, which seemed before dark and uninteresting. We might, for instance, put side by side the discourses of our blessed LORD with the Pharisees, and those which He held with His own disciples; we might see the one cavilling against the truth, and laying snares for Him who came to try and prove them, until at length He gave them over to their blindness, and denounced a fearful catalogue of woes upon their heads: we might watch the other, gradually weaned from prejudice and carnal-mindedness, instructed in "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," as they were able to learn them, until they were fit to be left alone in the world, with the SPIRIT of their departed Master to be with them to the end of their ministry, while they made disciples of all nations, and taught them to observe the things which he had commanded them. We should then trace, with no careless feeling, in the sixteenth chapter, the lines of the Christian Church. When we see the faithless Pharisees, leagued with their bitterest enemies, to tempt the Great Prophet of the Church; when we hear Him affectionately reproving His own disciples for their want of faith, and warning them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees; when we then hear the solemn question put to the twelve, and the bold and undoubting answer of St. Peter, we shall see a depth and fulness of meaning in our SAVIOUR's blessing, which perhaps we never saw before, and feel that "blessed" indeed are

we too, unto whom, through the covenant made with Simon, the son of Jonah, the blessed Chieftain of a blessed company, it has been revealed of the FATHER which is in heaven, that JESUS is "the CHRIST, the SON of the living GOD."

Or, let us turn to the passage in the eighteenth chapter, in which the name of "the Church" occurs again, and the promise made to St. Peter is incidentally confirmed to the whole Apostolic body. Our Blessed LORD is there teaching His disciples how we are to deal with our brethren when they offend us, and how oft to forgive them. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee two or three more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and as a publican. Verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." In this passage, taken by itself, we must understand by the term ἐκκλησία, as has been observed, a *visible* body: but let us look at it again in its connection with the series of passages in which we have seemed to trace the idea of "the kingdom of heaven" as the fulfilment of that elder visible Church, which was established by the ministry of Moses. The repetition of the promise before made to St. Peter connects this passage closely with that in chap. xvi.: *there* the power of the keys was promised by our LORD: *here* the principles and rules are given for its exercise. For these our blessed LORD refers to the spirit of the Mosaic law. The first step to be taken towards an offending brother breathes the general spirit of the Mosaic law, and closely agrees with the injunction specially given, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy brother, and not suffer sin upon him" (Lev. xix. 17). The next step is in exact fulfilment of the command in Deut. xvii. 6: "At the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death." And the final rejection of the brother that "will not

hear the Church," is in no less strict accordance with the spirit of the Mosaic denunciation : "And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest (that standeth to minister there before the LORD thy GOD), or unto the judge, even that man shall die : and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel." (Deut. xvii. 12.) The Christian "Church" seems thus to come into the place of the congregation of Israel ; the Apostles, into the office of the Levitical priest and judge ; and since their Master came to fulfil the law, they were to "do and teach" that law in his spiritual meaning. Now "the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned ; from which some having swerved," says the Apostle, "have turned aside unto vain jangling ; desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." (1 Tim. i. 5—7.) This description of false apostles, the rivals of the true apostles of CHRIST, is equally applicable to those whom they were appointed to supersede. If we look to our LORD's Sermon on the Mount, we find how the Scribes "swerved" from the commandment in its true "end" and object ; their explanations of the sixth and seventh commandments show how little they understood the spirit of the law of *love*. In that Sermon CHRIST's disciples are instructed how they are to fulfil the commandments : they are now directed how, as faithful ministers of GOD's word, they are to "do and teach" them, viz. by governing the Church of GOD according to the spirit of true brotherly love. Why had Levi been so grievously rebuked by the ministry of the last of the prophets ? (Mal. ii. 1—9.) Why was not "the offering of Judah and Jerusalem pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years ?" (Mal. iii. 4. comp. ii. 13.) They had forgotten the brotherly covenant which bound Israel together as children of one earthly parent, and one FATHER in heaven, who had a care for his "little ones," and would not that one of them should perish. "Have we not all one FATHER? hath not one GOD created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers ? Judah hath dealt treacherously, covering the altar of GOD with tears, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good-will at your

hand." (Mal. ii. 10—13.) But when the sons of Levi had been duly purified, that they might offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness—the true righteousness of the law, perfect brotherly love—then would the LORD again return to his temple, renew with Levi this "covenant of life and peace," and bless the sacred service of his holy congregation. "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," &c. Again, "I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree as touching any thing that they shall ask on earth, it shall be done for them of my FATHER which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Can we doubt of the meaning of this solemn promise? and is it not full of comfort to faithful members of CHRIST's holy catholic and apostolic church? Does it not teach us, that upon us truly "the ends of the world are come;" that we are the children of a long line of spiritual ancestry, the heirs, highly blessed and favoured indeed, of a rich and glorious inheritance?

It would be easy to follow out, to an almost indefinite extent, the line of illustration, of which a few points have been traced. Other similar lines might also be drawn, throwing much light upon separate passages of the same Gospel; as, for instance, the comparison of "the kingdom of heaven" to a householder, which might be traced through many parables, &c., throwing light upon the remarkable passage already referred to in the twenty-fourth chapter. Or again, in illustration of the fearful outline, which is there set before us, of the misconduct and punishment of the "wicked servant," we might draw out the intimations, which our LORD's words, on several occasions, give us, of unfaithful ministers and stewards, who were in after days to abuse the power committed to them, to lord it over their fellow servants, to eat and drink and to be drunken: or, still further, we might borrow from the condemnation of the Scribes and Pharisees a fearful light on the character of the "hypocrites," with whom his portion is assigned.

But enough, perhaps, has been said for our present purpose, which has been, not to urge for exclusive adoption a particular interpretation of certain passages, nor even to recommend any particular idea as supplying the only clue to their meaning; but simply to meet an objection, which, it is believed, indisposes the

minds of many thoughtful readers of Holy Scripture to receiving the evidence which is drawn from its records, in support of the doctrine of "the Church." To such persons it is here suggested, that their difficulty arises from prejudice in favour of a particular theory. Scripture may be viewed from other points than that which they have chosen: and the theory which a different view suggests may perhaps be found to explain more phenomena, and unfold deeper mysteries, than theirs. The expression, or incident, or argument, which they overlook, and cast aside, may, to another, serve as a clue to a mysterious volume, and give "thoughts which do often lie too deep for tears." Only let not persons be startled and offended at finding truths of Scripture which they had entirely overlooked, or thought practically unimportant, assuming a prominent place in the system which is recommended to their consideration. This must be the case at first. If the interpretation given of a passage of Scripture seems agreeable to the natural sense of the words, to the context, or to other parts of Scripture; if it seem to give more meaning to passages or portions than they had in our eyes before; let this be enough for us for the present: let us thankfully admit it, not lightly or hastily starting objections, or caring for its effect upon our pre-conceived opinions. "Every word of God is pure" (Prov. xxx. 5): and if we are bidden not to "add to His words," lest He reprove us, and we be found liars (v. 6); we are also warned, in the most mysterious, and, to many readers, apparently unpractical, book of the New Testament, "If any man shall take away from the words of the prophecy of this book, God shall take away his part out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Rev. xxii. 19.) Surely we may incur the risk of thus taking away from the words of prophecy, without literally mangling its sacred page. We may settle with ourselves, that it is an external matter, and not important to our individual interests. Rather let us humbly receive the very crumbs which fall from the Master's table, "laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speakings, if so be we have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (1 Pet. ii. 1. 3). The scattered limbs of sacred truth, which are presented to our view, may seem to us at first sight like the dry bones, which the prophet saw in the

valley of vision: but the word of prophecy may yet bring them together, may cover them with sinew, and flesh, and skin, and fill them with a living spirit; the breath from the four winds may breathe upon the slain, and they may "stand up" upon their feet, before our eyes, "an exceeding great army." "And when this cometh to pass, then shall they know that there hath been a prophet among them:" "for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the LORD GOD." Wherefore, "now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD: and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech the high priest, and be strong all ye people of the land, and work, for I am with you, saith the LORD of Hosts. According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not." (Haggai ii. 4, 5.) "Go ye therefore, and *make disciples* of all nations, teaching them to observe *all things whatsoever I have commanded you;* and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

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The Feast of the Nativity.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

BISHOP WILSON'S MEDITATIONS ON HIS SACRED OFFICE.

No. 4.—WEDNESDAY—*(continued).*

Luke xvi. 19. "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." For a man, then, to be rich, to be clothed magnificently, and to take no care of the poor, is sufficient to send him to hell, because he cannot lead a Christian life. Repentance, mortification, and the cross, are utterly inconsistent with a soft, sensual, voluptuous life; the desire of happiness, with the love of this present life. It is, therefore, a most miserable state, for a man to have every thing according to his desire, and quietly to enjoy the pleasures of life. There needs no more to expose him to eternal misery. "He that loveth his life, shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal." (John xii. 25.) He that loveth life, (that is, is fond of it) for the sake of the pleasures, advantages, it affords, will soon lose the love of heavenly things; the love of God, of his soul, and of the duty he owes to them: He hates it, who does not value it in comparison of eternal life which he hopes for. A Christian gives proof of this, by mortifying himself; a Pastor, in spending his life in the works of the ministry, &c. Those whom God loves in order to an happy eternity, He weans from the pleasures of this present life.

Temperance consists in a sober use of all earthly, visible things, and in confining ourselves within the compass of what is necessary. With God all things are possible. The Almighty God enable me to conquer the temptations of riches, and to get above

the allurements of this present life. There is much more reason for a man to humble himself, on account of his self-denial, than to boast of it, since the corruption of his nature is so great, that he cannot follow even the lawful dictates of nature, without hazarding his soul. Christian self-denial is, to resist and crucify in ourselves the spirit and inclinations of Adam,—the flesh, its affections and lusts,—to die to our passions, in order to follow the motions of the Spirit.

Fasting.

Necessary, to bring our hearts to a penitent, holy, and devout temper. Our Church requires this, and appoints days and times, &c.; and it has been the honour of this Church, that she hath kept up to her rules, where others have shamefully neglected them. Fasting necessary, to perform the vows that are upon us all. By fasting, by alms, and by prayers, we dedicate our bodies, goods, and souls to God in a particular manner.

Meditations proper for a Clergyman during Lent.

The primitive Bishops had places of retirement near their cities, that they might separate themselves from the world, lest teaching others they should forget themselves; lest they should lose the spirit of piety themselves, while they were endeavouring to fix it in others.

Prosper, O God, the good thoughts, the good purposes, which Thou Thyself shalt inspire. I acknowledge Thy goodness, which has raised me above my brethren, and appointed me a Successor to Thy Apostles. O may I ever act agreeably to this character. May I never profane a character so holy and so divine, lest God should pour down His vengeance upon my ungrateful heart. Pardon me whereinsoever I have been wanting in the several duties of my calling; and give me grace to be more careful for the time to come. Amen.

How am I bound to adore Thy goodness, my great Master! Thou hast set me in office amongst the chief of Thy servants; but I will for Thy sake, make myself the servant of the meanest of Thy servants. By me Thou communicatest Thy grace in the

Sacrament; by me Thou teachest Thy people the truth; by my hands thou adoptest them Thy children in baptism, feedest them with thy body, comfortest them in affliction, armest them against the fear of death, and fittest them for a blessed eternity. Grant that I may truly weigh the sanctity of my calling, and faithfully discharge it; and that others may weigh it, and bless Thee for so great a blessing. I am appointed to sanctify others. O grant that I may first sanctify myself; that I may separate myself from this world, its profits, pleasures, honours, and all its idols. Amen. Let my zeal, O my Lord and Master, be answerable to that account which I must one day give. Let me not see Thy laws broken, hear Thy name blasphemed, Thy word set at nought, Thine ordinances despised, with patience. And oh, may I never, by any neglect or sinful silence of mine, contribute to these crimes; but employ my authority to suppress them. Let me remember what was once said by Christ himself to a Christian bishop: "Because thou art lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Inspire my heart with such holy resolution and courage, that I may not fear any man when Thy honour and my duty call me; that no worldly considerations may hinder me, when my office obliges me to stand in the gap. Amen. Give me such holy dispositions of soul, whenever I approach Thine altar, as may in some measure be proportionable to the holiness of the work I am about, of presenting the prayers of the faithful, of offering a spiritual sacrifice to God, in order to convey the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the true bread of life, to all His members. Give me, when I commemorate the same sacrifice that Jesus Christ once offered, give me the same intentions that He had to satisfy the justice of God, to acknowledge His mercies, and to pay all that debt which a creature owes to his Creator. None can do this effectually but Jesus Christ; Him, therefore we present to God, in this Holy Sacrament. O Thou, who hast made me a servant in Thy house, give me such dispositions as that I may never dishonour Thy service. Amen.

I am a sinner, and yet I am appointed to offer up prayers for others. It is to the great God to whom I offer these prayers. To me the Church, the spouse of Christ, intrusts her desires, her

interests, her necessities, and her thanks. What a trust is this! O may I never betray it! may I never obstruct Thy mercies to Thy Church by a formal service. Let me ever speak to God, and from God with attention, with love, with respect, with fear, with purity of heart, and with unpolluted lips. Amen. The office of a shepherd of souls is full of difficulty. Consider what toil Jesus Christ underwent, what reproaches, what contempt, what despight!—and from those persons to whom He preached the most concerning truths; and, last of all, laying down His life for His sheep. I am astonished, and greatly ashamed, when I consider how very far I come short of this pattern, how poor my pains have been, how little of my time, my care, my thoughts, have been spent in this service. O Chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls, communicate to me, the meanest of thy herdsmen, such a degree of concern as may thoroughly qualify me for this great work; pardon my past negligence, and lay not to my charge the evils which may have happened thereby. Amen. Consider the patience of your great Master, with what compassion He treated sinners; transcribe His example; and if any of your flock are perverse, froward, obstinate, bear with them, condescend to their weakness, and strive to reduce them even against their wills. But has this been my way? Very far from it. I have been impatient when any of my flock have not been bettered by my care and pains. And this, not from a true zeal for the glory of God, and the good of souls, but too often, alas! from a principle of self-love; angry, because I have been so conceited as to think that my labours should not be in vain. And yet how often has God spoken to me myself, and I regarded it not? How long was his grace ineffectual even with myself. O Jesu, impart to me a portion of that Spirit of meekness which prevailed with Thee to preach to a people who regarded Thee not, who despised, who crucified Thee. Then why should I, who am a sinner, complain of my unsuccessful labours? Forgive, gracious God, the faults I have committed in this great work of the ministry; and let no unworthiness in me hinder thy blessings from descending upon the souls committed to my care. Amen.

Reflect seriously what a dreadful account you have to give,

if you say, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace;" or if you give the children's bread to dogs, that is, admit to the LORD's Table those that are unworthy of such a favour. This would be to lay men asleep in their sin. LORD, preserve Thy servant from this sin. Amen. I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done. O LORD, that I could say this to the flock over which the HOLY GHOST hath made me Overseer. That I could say, Be ye devout, as ye see me devout; do ye forgive one another, as ye see me ready to forgive; despise the world, &c. as ye see me do it. Let me seriously consider, that I am not only answerable for my own personal offences; I sin every time I cause others to sin by my example. What reparation can be made, what answer can be given, when CHRIST requires our flock at our hand? LORD, suffer me not to follow my own will; reform me, that I may reform others; give me light to discover, and grace to amend, where I have done amiss. Amen. Let your conversation be such as becomes, not only the Gospel, but ministers of the Gospel, to whom all that is curious, useless, light, and vain, is forbidden; all scurrilous language, idle stories, &c.

Endeavour to leave some impression of piety upon the minds of those with whom you converse. JESUS CHRIST did so always. Make no distinction betwixt the rich and poor, as to converse with one, and not with the other. LORD, grant that Thy example may ever be before me; and my conversation holy, useful, and edifying. Amen.

As to the disposal of the Church's revenues, the suggestions of avarice, of vanity, of pleasure, and of the world, ought not to govern me. I am only a steward, not a proprietor, and should be as criminal as those laymen, that invade them, if I convert them to lay and secular uses; which side of sacrilege, very probably, took its rise from others observing the Church's revenues put to secular uses. Grant, O my LORD, who hast given me much more of this world's goods than Thou tookest Thyself, grant that I may apply the goods of the Church to Thy glory, and to the support of Thy poor members; and pardon all my vain expenses. Amen.

He, and especially that Minister, "that hath not the spirit of CHRIST, is none of His." He ought to perform all his duties in CHRIST's name, by His authority and power; and offer all to GOD through Him; adore JESUS CHRIST as preaching, praying, absolving, and comforting, by you His Minister, LORD, grant that I may set Thee ever before me, that I may direct all my labours to Thy glory; let me so speak, and so live, that my words and actions may be worthy of Thee, that Thou mayest call them Thine. Amen.

"The Priest's lips should keep knowledge." Whence this knowledge, but from the holy Scriptures, which alone make us sound in doctrine, and able to convince gainsayers? But even these are not to be understood without the light of GOD's SPIRIT, a diligent reading of them, and a knowledge of the maladies men are subject to, in order to apply them wisely and safely. Men read the Gospel rather as judges than as disciples, which is the rise of all errors both in life and doctrine. Grant, O LORD, that when I read Thy Word, I may do it with a spirit crucified to the world, to my curiosity, to my vanity, to my interest, and to my prejudices. Cure me, O blessed Physician, first, and then teach me to know and relieve the maladies of my flock, that I may present them sound and lovely in Thy sight. Amen. Covetousness is idolatry in every man; but it is abominable in a minister of JESUS CHRIST, who ever affected poverty rather than wealth, who lived upon charity, and forbad his disciples superfluities, when he sent them to preach the Gospel. He that takes care of the fowls of the air will never fail to provide for His own ministers. It is therefore infidelity to be over careful for this world. GOD grant that I may ever depend upon the providence of GOD!

Purity of soul and body is a most necessary qualification in a Minister of JESUS CHRIST. To offer the prayers of the faithful to GOD with polluted lips, to break the bread of life with unclean hands, to receive that bread into a soul defiled with unchaste thoughts, how dreadfully provoking must it needs be!

A blindness of spirit, an alienation from divine things, an incapacity to receive them, are the necessary effects of im-

purity. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit. Into a malicious soul wisdom and piety cannot enter. Matth. v. 8. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

A Priest, who, in the exercise of his function, has an eye to the grandeur, repute, esteem of great men, presumptuous authority over the consciences of others, worldly advantages, &c. perverts the design of the Ministry.

Grant, O Lord, that I may regard nothing but Thy glory, that I may act and live for Thee alone, that my zeal for Thy glory, and the good of souls, may be the chief motive of all my actions. Amen.

Oxford,
The Feast of St. Stephen.

[NEW EDITION.]

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

ON DISSENT WITHOUT REASON IN CONSCIENCE.

"As one mass doth contain the good ore and base alloy; as one floor the corn and the chaff; as one field the wheat and the tares; as one net the choice fish and the refuse; as one fold the sheep and the goats; as one tree the living and dry branches; so doth the *Visible* Church enfold the true universal Church, called the Church mystical and *invisible.* And for this reason, and because presumptively every member of the Visible Church doth pass for a member of the invisible, (the time of distinction and separation being not yet come,) because this Visible Church, in its profession of truth, in its sacrifices of devotion, in its practice of service and duty of God, doth communicate with the invisible, therefore commonly the titles and attributes of one are imparted to the other."—*Altered from Barrow on the Unity of the Church,* vol. vii. p. 631.

It is often asked, "Why should not a man attend both the Church and Meeting, if he derives benefit from both?" And again, "Why should not a man be a Dissenter, though he have nothing particular to object against the Church, if he is not violent in his opposition to the Church?" The following remarks, in answer to these questions, were written by a clergyman for the use of his parishioners.

Many of you have made remarks to me on the subject of Dissent, when I have been visiting you in your cottages; and the substance of these remarks has apparently been, that it was of very little importance, whether a man belonged to the Church or dissented from it, because the difference is after all but small between Churchmen and Dissenters. You have thus spoken (as it would seem) sometimes with a view of drawing out my opinions, sometimes as a sort of defence or apology for your own, sometimes in

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order to invite an argument. I have purposely in my answers abstained from entering into the question, and confined myself to saying simply that I did not think as you did upon the matter. It would by no means have fallen in with the purpose for which I visited you on first coming to the parish, to have entered into any lengthened reasonings. My object in calling was to express my good-will towards you, and therefore to seek our points of agreement, and not our points of difference.

At the same time you are not to suppose that I at all wish to conceal my sentiments, and it is because some of you may perhaps have an erroneous impression of what my opinion is on this subject, that I now write this. My observations will be as short as I can well make them. I shall avoid as much as possible any thing like controversy, or any expressions of opinion as to the relative merits of this or that form of dissent, or any discussion of the particular Articles of Faith (so far as there may be said to be such at all) among the several persuasions around us.—Bear in mind, my object is to show you that Dissent is a sin.

But before I proceed further I must make two observations, which I wish you to keep in mind, while you read these remarks, because they will remove some difficulty, which you might otherwise feel in what follows.

1. I allow there may be *conscientious* Dissenters, nay, I hope in charity, there are many;—but by a conscientious Dissenter, I mean a man who separates himself from the Church, because he thinks he finds something in her doctrines or discipline so far contrary to scriptural truth, and the precepts of the Gospel, that by adhering to her, he would be putting an obstacle in the way of his own salvation. Other persons may think themselves conscientious Dissenters who do not go nearly so far in their condemnation of the doctrines or practice of the Church: nay, so far from it, that they would defend their Dissent upon the ground that there is no material difference between the system and teaching in the one, and the system and teaching in the other. But such men I do not call conscientious Dissenters, but careless or weak-minded persons, who cannot have thought much or seriously upon the subject, and who can hardly have read with attention

what is to be found in the New Testament respecting the sin of schism, or on the authority of the Church, and the duty of obedience to it. Indeed a man ought to consider very seriously what account he can give of his faith, who is so far both Churchman and Dissenter, and so far disposed towards both, as to attend indiscriminately one or other place of worship; who also could give very little better explanation of the difference between one and the other, than a statement of the difference in the public services of each, and other particular matters of form, and of external observance. Such a person can be neither a true Churchman nor a conscientious Dissenter. He cannot be a true Churchman, for if he was, he would not attend a Dissenting place of worship. For Dissent from the Church must imply a condemnation of something or other, be it of more or less importance, in the doctrines or discipline of the Established Church. And whoever attends service in a Meeting-house, *when he has the opportunity* of going to the Parish Church, does, by so doing, give his silent approbation to the principle of Dissent, and shows that at least he does not disapprove the opinions of the particular body to whose meeting he goes. He cannot be, on the other hand, a conscientious Dissenter, or he would not frequent the Church, *i. e.* a place of worship, which is supported by a system, which he considers one of injustice, and which excludes and condemns[1] that to which he himself belongs; to say nothing about the probability of his hearing something, which, though not directly levelled against Dissent, still is in spirit a reproof and protest against it.

2. When I say that Dissent is a *sin*, I by no means thereby imply, that for that reason every Dissenter is at once and necessarily a sinner. To say that a particular thing is a sin, is a very different thing from saying that every one who does it is a sinner. It will be as well to make this quite clear to you, and therefore I will give you some cases in which you would, without hesitation, make the same remark that I have done.—To kill a fellow-creature is undoubtedly a crime; but you would not say that the

[1] *E. g.* by the sentences in the Litany against "false doctrine, heresy, and schism," and that God may "bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are deceived," and by the prayers for the unity of the Church.

person who killed another by accident, or in defence of his country, or of his own life, or by command of lawful authorities, was a criminal. There are, indeed, few deeds which are in a general way sins, which may not be committed under such circumstances as to rescue the person who did them from being on that account a sinner. There was once a nation which did not think thieving wrong: there is a nation which does not consider a parent's destroying a child, when too poor to maintain it, as a sin: and there is a class or sect in another nation who hold the same opinion as to the lives of their parents, when too old to be serviceable to themselves. You see from these illustrations that the *degree* of criminality attaching to a person for his actions, depends very much on the extent of knowledge he has of the nature of the act, his education, and various other circumstances. It is very difficult to weigh these exactly in estimating *how far* any particular person himself does wrong while he is committing a wrong act; God alone can see the heart; and, therefore, it is better to speak without immediate reference to persons, and only as to the character of the opinion or action under consideration.

With these explanations, first, on the score of *conscience* causing it; next, of *circumstances* varying the degree of criminality in different persons, I repeat Dissent is a *sin*, which I now go on to prove to you.

Persons dissent from the Church on account of some difference or other, this is plain; and, from what I have already said, it is also plain that I do not intend to say any thing in what follows concerning the *greater* differences which cause Dissent, *i. e.* differences which are founded upon a different interpretation of Scripture. For when a man thinks the Church unscriptural, he has a good reason for leaving it, and is (what I have called above) a *conscientious* Dissenter; though at the same time I am bound to say, I think his conscience a very erroneous one, which leads him to consider the Church unscriptural; and while I allow him to be *conscientious* in one sense of the word, yet I also think him *heretical*,—just as those men who (as our Lord foretold) thought, when they persecuted the Apostles, "they did God service," were wrong, not in that they obeyed their conscience, but because

they had not a more enlightened conscience. "The light that is in" a merely *conscientious* Dissenter is (what CHRIST has called) "darkness." I say this before passing on to consider (as I mean to do) the other kind of Dissenters, those, *viz.* who dissent for some *lesser* difference, merely lest you should suppose that I consider a person absolved from all guilt, *on the ground* of his being conscientious; for as a good conscience is a great treasure, so a dark conscience is like the blind leading the blind. Now then let me address myself to that large number of persons who have no material objection against the Church as to its doctrines or discipline, and who do not think that a Dissenter will be saved a bit more than a Churchman; who, indeed, are so far from condemning the Church, that they always feel rather disposed, when acknowledging their Dissent, to make a sort of apology or explanation for their leaving the Church, as, *e. g.* that "it was so far to go to Church," or that "their health was weak," or "no good sittings were to be had," or that "they had an objection to the clergyman of the parish," or that "they were more edified by the service at Meeting, as more spiritual," or such reasons. I shall begin by placing before you some arguments, which indirectly support my assertion concerning the sinfulness of Dissent.

(1.) Christians are required to unite in serving GOD in mutual charity and hearty concord. Hence such directions as these from the Apostles to different Churches, *viz.* that they should endeavour to keep "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," that they should be "like-minded, having the same love," being "of one accord, of one mind, standing fast in one Spirit with one mind," that they should "walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing," that "with one mind and one mouth they should glorify GOD, the Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST," that they should "all speak the same thing," that there should be "no divisions among them," but that they be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment [1]."

As to the construction which some persons put on such passages, *viz.* by making them to refer to an unity in the spiritual

[1] Phil. ii. 2; i. 27; iii. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 8. Eph. iv. 3. Rom. xv. 5, 6; xii. 16. 2 Cor. xiii. 11. 1 Cor. i. 10.

sense, to a mystical union of the faithful all over the world, in the invisible Church of CHRIST, it is clearly inadmissible. For as a matter of *reason*, what can be the use of such strong and repeated exhortations to an union, whose only external sign is a profession of charitable indifference to all diversities of religious opinion, and whose principal bond of union is a secret internal feeling, as to which no one can exactly judge his neighbour. And yet in the New Testament, directions are given concerning such divisions, as respecting a thing, of which every Christian can judge. And further, as a matter of *fact*, the Church or body, in which unity is preserved, is spoken of as a *visible* body. *Vid.* Matth. xvi. 18; xviii. 17. 1 Tim. iii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. Eph. iv. 4—12.

(*2.*) Obedience to superiors is enjoined. This command seems to me, to give a double sanction to the legitimately appointed authorities of the Church. First, An authority *indirectly*, in as much as duty to the State requires of us obedience to all those who have the sanction of its authority for their dignities, provided always, obedience to them does not involve some sacrifice of principle, so as to be against our consciences [1]. Hence, since the time that Church and State have been united, it becomes the duty of a good subject to pay reverence and obedience to the appointed ministers of religion, upon civil as well as upon religious grounds. Secondly, An authority *directly*, because obedience to *spiritual* superiors is *separately* enjoined. *E. g.* "Likewise ye younger, submit yourselves to the elder," 1 Pet. v. 5. :—(you will see from the first and second verses, that the elders mean spiritual superiors, who are set over you.) And again, "Submit yourselves unto such, and to every one, that helpeth with us, and laboureth." 1 Cor. xvi. 16. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for

[1] *E. g.* If the State religion became Roman Catholic, it could not be our duty to conform to that, because we should thereby compromise some of the fundamental articles of our faith, and admit others to be fundamental, some of which are not so—and others, which not only are not so, but are moreover in themselves false. On the other hand, if the State ordered the observance of Saints' days, or a day of national humiliation, it is the duty of a good subject to observe them.

your souls, as they that must give account." (Heb. xiii. 17.) Again, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the LORD, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake." (1 Thess. v. 12, 13.)

(3.) It is also a command to Christians, not to give a brother cause of sorrow and offence. Now any separation must do that. The question therefore is, whether the grounds for it are such as to compel us, from regard to our own souls, and even out of Christian charity to him, to separate from communion with the body to which he belongs, that we may thereby make him acquainted with the danger there is to his eternal salvation in remaining in a body, from which we feel obliged, for conscience sake, to come out. If we do not think we endanger our salvation by continuing in the Church, we are not justified for mere matters of opinion, and things, which we do not hold to be essentials of religion, to cast a reproach upon the body, from which we remove as from a thing unclean [1], and to give pain, doubts, and cause of dissensions, by thus withdrawing.

I proceed next to some direct arguments in support of the assertion, that separation, as such, and when not on account of some fundamental doctrine, is a *sin*.

1st. Hear what Scripture tells us should be our conduct towards those who cause divisions, and then consider, whether such persons are brought before us as exercising a proper liberty of choice.

"We command you in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother, that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which ye have received of us." (2 Thess. iii. 6.)

[1] "Nevertheless, I do not hesitate to express a persuasion, that our own case happily is such, in the Established Church of England, that we may rightly, and are bound to, receive the faith of our forefathers, as delivered to us in its authorized form, by the same measure of acceptance, *in kind*, as we receive Scripture itself: not hastily taking part against it (as so many do,) on account of incidental or subordinate objections; but accepting it in Christian duty, *as it is*, and abiding by it, until, after *experiment of holy living*, it shall be proved perilous, or at least inadequate, to the soul's welfare, according to the very terms of Scripture."—*Miller's Bamp. Lec.* p. 15. note.

"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, nor bid him God speed." (2 John 10.)

"These are they who separate themselves, sensual [1], having not the Spirit." (Jude 19.)

"I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences [2], contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." (Rom. xvi. 17.)

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railing, evil-surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness, from such withdraw thyself." (1 Tim. vi. 3—5.)

2ndly. Consider the manner they are represented in, who cause disunion in the Church. The terms are, indeed, so harsh to modern (so called) liberal notions, that one feels sure of incurring the reproach of being a bigot for venturing thus to apply what we read in Scripture; and the general view respecting these passages probably is, that the time of their application is quite gone by, and that they have long since become a dead letter. And yet, reflect these terms are not used of persons, who were infidels, or heathens, or of those who corrupted the main doctrines of Christianity. St. Paul blames the Corinthians, because they expressed a preference for one teacher above another, and though they all taught the same thing, still he says of such a difference, "that there are contentions among you," and speaks of it as an evidence of their "carnal mind." (1 Cor. iii. 3.)

[1] *Sensual*:—The Greek word, which is so translated, does not at all imply a person who lives a vicious and voluptuous life, given up to the lusts of the flesh, but a person who rules himself, and walks according to the visible course of things in the world around him, trusting entirely to human reasonings in religion, and to what is called "fleshly wisdom," and having no part in that wisdom, which is from above.

[2] "Which cause offences," *i. e.* causes of perplexity or pain to others, stumbling-blocks, obstacles, snares, &c.

3rdly. There are many passages in the Epistles, in which the ways, dispositions, and practices of false teachers are described, concerning which the learned differ much, and determine differently the sort of opinions condemned in them. Allowing, however, what weight is fair to this circumstance, yet after all look at them attentively with a view of finding whether they will give you any light for the guidance of your conduct in this matter; and, while you consider them, bear the following remarks in mind:—

1. That which is condemned in these persons is either their professing false doctrine, or their making disorder, disturbance, and disunion in the Church. If you think any of them apply to the second, then such passages apply to my argument here, because they go to prove, that making a separation and disputes in the Church is wrong.

2. You will learn from some of them that a person may *think* himself quite sincere in leaving the Church, and, yet his own heart may have deceived him, though it cannot deceive God, who will call him to account hereafter. 2 Tim. iii. 13. 2 Thess. ii. 11.

3. You will see that heresy and schism are placed along with bad passions, and bad actions, and vicious dispositions, as if in some way connected with them, and as if we may therefore be called to give account for these *opinions*, just as much as for those actions, and passions, and dispositions of mind. 1 Tim. vi. 3. 20; i. 3, 4. 2 Tim. iv. 3; iii. 13. Gal. i. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 18. 10; iii. 16. Tit. i. 10; iii. 10, 11. 2 Cor. xi. 13. 15. Acts xx. 29. Matt. vii. 15. 2 Thess. iii. 6. 11. 2 John 9. Eph. iv. 14. Jude 16. Phil. i. 15, 16.

4thly. Consider the case of Korah in the Old Testament. He was a priest of the second order, and with other Levites, withdrew his obedience from the High Priest. There was no matter of doctrine or worship in dispute between them and Aaron, nor any other dispute than that of Church government. And yet how terrible was his punishment. In his case we cannot evade the application to the Gospel times, because St. Jude makes it for us, speaking of those who "perish in the gainsaying of Core." Jude 11.

5thly. When the Jews fell into wickedness and idolatry, priests as well as people, and God sent prophets to reprove them, yet none of these holy prophets did separate from communion with the wicked priests, and set up another priesthood in opposition to them. They did not think it lawful, how holy soever they were, to intrude themselves into the priesthood, as they had not been lawfully called and appointed.

These two cases go very strongly to prove that there is a *duty* to submit ourselves, for conscience sake, to the established order and manner in the Church, so long as the Church enjoins nothing which plainly contradicts the revealed will of God, and to perform which would therefore do violence to our sense of right.

6thly. Consider, further, the ground upon which our Saviour ordered the authority of the Scribes and Pharisees to be respected, *viz.* because they sat in Moses' seat, (Matt. xxiii. 2.) *i. e.* because they were the lawfully appointed and regularly ordained ministers of the established religion. Moreover, throughout the Acts of the Apostles, where we are to look for the use and gradual formation of a system of Church government, in proportion as the converts become more numerous, and more widely scattered in different countries, we may trace a principle of union and of subordination throughout the various Churches and Assemblies of believers. Care too was taken for the continuance of this union and this subordination, both in the manner of appointing teachers, *then*, and in providing for their similar appointment *for the time to come:* and this manner of providing a due supply of fit persons for the ministry has been observed not only during the age of the Apostles, and their immediate successors, but it may be said through the first fifteen centuries after the establishment of Christianity.

7thly. Turn to the solemn prayers of our Saviour in the 17th chapter of St. John. "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name, those whom Thou hast given to me, that they may be *one as we are*[1];" and, again, in the same prayer, "neither pray I for

[1] These words of our Saviour I take as more than an *indirect* argument. They speak so clearly of all future believers in the Gospel, for whose unity He prays; the closeness of which proper unity, He illustrates by comparing it

these alone, but for them also, which shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us." . . . . Would it not be in direct opposition to the spirit and letter of this prayer to justify every individual Christian in claiming the right of withdrawing himself from communion with the Church upon every slight difference of opinion? As if Christianity required of us no surrender whatever of the private judgment, and as if it were never right for a Christian silently to acquiesce in existing usages, or new ordinances, in things indifferent, when commanded by lawful authority, unless he was convinced of the benefit and propriety of them, which would, in fact, be to make every individual Christian a law unto himself in all things; or, to adapt our language to the day, as if it were never required to assent in religious matters in the same way as in civil matters, *i. e.* without being convinced of the advisableness or benefit of the thing enjoined, but merely because, on the one hand, lawful authority orders it, and, on the other, we see no danger to our souls in obeying it.

8thly. Christ hath given an authority to the Church, and therefore there is but one thing which can justify us in going against its authority, and that is, a firm conviction, that by doing what the Church orders, we should transgress some still more evident and higher command of God; as, *e. g.* when the Church of Rome pronounced it lawful to take away the lives of excommunicated princes. And is not separating from the Church transgressing its authority?

If any one ask, where is this authority spoken of in Scripture, let him consider the following texts.

"He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me." (Luke x. 16.)

"If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Matt. xviii. 17.)

with the union between His Father and Himself, *i. e.* between the two first Persons of the blessed Trinity, in which *Three* are *One*. Can there be said to be such an union in the Christian Church if every one "hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation?"

"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xviii. 18.)

"Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained." (John xx. 23.)

"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 20.)

9thly. CHRIST hath appointed the Church as the only way unto eternal life. We read at the first, that the LORD added daily to the Church such as should be saved; and what was then done daily, hath been done since continually. CHRIST never appointed two ways to heaven; nor did He build a Church to save some, and make another institution for other men's salvation. "There is no other name under heaven given unto men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of JESUS," and that is no otherwise given under heaven, than in the Church [1].

Here, then, I finish my series of arguments. Not that there are not many others, which might be brought forward, to show, that Dissent is wrong; but I prefer confining my remarks to those which have something in common with one another. The principles upon which all the reasonings here given are in some sort founded, are, 1. the Christian duty of obedience; 2. of preserving unity; 3. of avoiding, in all cases where we can with a safe conscience, any giving occasion of offence, or pain, or perplexity, to our Christian brethren: — in other words, the duty of having an eye always to CHRISTIAN CHARITY, *i. e.* brotherly love, in our way of performing our duties, especially those about the limits of which we are not *quite sure.*

[1] How is it we speak of the external unity of the visible Church, when there are many different Churches in different nations? "All the Church of GOD are united into one by the unity of discipline and government, by virtue whereof the same CHRIST ruleth in them all. For they have all the same pastoral guides, appointed, authorized, sanctified, and set apart by the appointment of GOD, by the direction of the SPIRIT, to direct and lead the people of GOD in the same way of eternal salvation: as therefore there is no Church where there is no order, no ministry; so, where the same order and ministry is, there is the same Church."—*Pearson.*

The sum of the matter as here set before you is this. If a man's separation from the Church be upon grounds which he really believes to be of vital importance, I have nothing to do with him. He acts from conscientious motives, and cannot remain in communion with a Church, which teaches what he holds to be false doctrines. "To his own master he standeth or falleth;" and it is not for me to judge how he has come to this conclusion. I can, however, fully understand, that so long as he holds such an opinion about our Church, he cannot have any thing to do with it, but must come out from it. But if I see a man attending the Church occasionally, as if he thought there was no *positive harm* in what is taught there, then I say, that man has not done rightly in becoming a Dissenter, because I gather from Scripture that it is a duty to submit to established authorities in religious matters, just as in political and civil matters, so long as there is no vital and essential difference between his own articles of faith, and those which the established Church maintains. He ought to submit in all things indifferent for conscience sake. And his only sound and sufficient defence for separating from the Church, is a belief, that he cannot be saved in it on account of its holding false doctrine. If he cannot say this, he has no sufficient reason for thus "rending CHRIST's body," by removing himself out of the Church, and for giving an example to others to set up some new sect for themselves upon any trifli g ground of difference.

I will add only one more remark in conclusion, which is this. You read in the New Testament of great and important promises made to the Church, whatever that Church be: you read also of many very strong and sharp rebukes given to those, who caused dissensions and disputes in the Church, during the time of the Apostles: you read also of the heavy condemnation, which will come upon those who have been partakers in these sins; and also you know the warnings of our SAVIOUR and of the Apostles, that in the latter days, the danger and subtilty of these errors and heresies would increase, so as to deceive (if it were possible) even the elect; and, lastly, you know, that even though persons think they are conscientiously obliged to make a schism, still

they may be condemned for this very false conviction of their deceitful hearts. Now, since all this is the case, would it not be *prudent* for a single man, who thinks of becoming a Dissenter, to consider seriously where he is most likely to come within the terms of these promises, and where he is least likely to be liable to the threats and denunciations above alluded to? Would it not be well to reason with himself somewhat on this wise: "The Church may not mean the Church, as some people understand it, who suppose that Dissenters are left out of it; but still as I never heard any one say, that the Dissenters were the only true Church, and that the Established Church was shut out of the promises, because she was no part of the true Church, surely I am more safe, more likely to come in for a share of these blessings, if, while in other things I strive to do my duty without troubling myself to decide things, which in truth are too hard for me, I continue a member of the Established Church. By so doing, I follow the example of my forefathers, of my country, of holy martyrs before me, and rest my faith on the authority of those who are, by virtue of their office, successors of the Apostles; whereas, in the other case, I must, on my own judgment, set aside all this weight of authority, and do that, which is as much as to say, that till within the last three hundred years the whole world has been in darkness, and that I can see clearer than all those great, and good, and pious, and learned persons, who have lived and died before me in the faith." Surely it is the safer course to remain stedfastly in the Church, without halting between two opinions; there is more chance of your being right there.

NOTE.

P. S. In order that you may know whom you ought to look upon as your proper spiritual guides and governors, I lay before you the description given of them by the famous Dr. Isaac Barrow. "Those, I say, then, who constantly do profess and teach that sound and wholesome doctrine, which was delivered

by our LORD and His Apostles in word and writing, was received by their disciples in the primitive Churches, was transmitted and confirmed by general tradition, was sealed by the blood of the blessed martyrs, and propagated by the labours of the holy fathers; the which also manifestly recommendeth and promoteth true reverence and piety towards GOD, justice and charity towards men, order and quiet in human societies, purity and sobriety in each man's private conversation.

"Those who celebrate the true worship of GOD, and administer the holy mysteries of our religion, in a serious, grave, and decent manner, purely and without any notorious corruption, either by hurtful error, or superstitious foppery, or irreverent rudeness, to the advancement of GOD's honour, and edification of the participants in virtue and piety.

"Those who derive their authority by a continued succession from the Apostles, who are called unto and constituted in their office in a regular and peaceable way, agreeable to the institution of GOD, and the constant practice of His Church, according to rules approved in the best and purest ages; who are prepared to the exercise of their functions by the best education, that ordinarily can be provided under sober discipline, in the schools of the prophets; who thence, by competent endowments of mind and useful furniture of good learning, acquired by painful study, become qualified to guide and instruct the people; who, after previous examination of their abilities, and probable testimonies concerning their manners (with regard to the qualifications of incorrupt doctrine and sober conversation, prescribed by the Apostles), are adjudged fit for the office; who, also, in a pious, grave, solemn manner, with invocation of GOD's blessing, by laying on of the hands of the presbytery, are admitted thereunto.

"Those whose practice in guiding and governing the people of GOD, is not managed by arbitrary, uncertain, fickle, private fancies or humours, but regulated by standing laws; framed (according to general directions extant in holy Scripture) by pious and wise persons, with mature advice, in accommodation to the seasons and circumstances of things, for common edification, order, and peace.

"Those, who, by virtue of their good principles, in their dispositions and demeanour appear sober, orderly, peaceable, yielding meek submission to government, tendering the Church's peace, upholding the communion of the saints, abstaining from all schismatical, turbulent, and factious practices.

"Those, also, who are acknowledged by the laws of our country, an obligation to obey whom is part of that human constitution unto which we are in all things (not evidently repugnant to God's law) indispensably bound to submit; whom our Sovereign, God's vicegerent, and the nursing father of His Church among us, (unto whom in all things high respect, in all lawful things entire obedience, is due) doth command and encourage us to obey.

"Those, I say, to whom this character plainly doth agree, we may reasonably be assured, that they are our true guides and governors whom we are obliged to follow and obey; for what better assurance can we in reason desire? what more proper marks can be assigned to discern them by? what methods of constituting such needful officers can be settled more answerable to their design and use? how can it be evil or unsafe to follow guides authorized by such warrants, conformed to such patterns, endowed with such dispositions, acting by such principles and rules? Can we mistake or miscarry, by complying with the great body of God's Church through all ages, and particularly with those great lights of the primitive Church, who, by the excellency of their knowledge, and the integrity of their virtue, have so illustrated our holy religion?"

(*Barrow*, Serm. LVI. p. 284—287. vol. iii.)

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

SERMONS FOR SAINTS' DAYS AND HOLIDAYS.

(No. 1. ST. MATTHIAS.)

"*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.*"—St. John xv. 16.

THE service of this day invites us to consider the nature and commission of that ministry, by which Christians all over the world are made partakers of heavenly and spiritual blessings.

On this point, as on most others, it is obvious that the New Testament does no where furnish a regular and orderly course of instruction, such as on many great subjects we find in our Creeds, Articles, and Catechisms. But the mind and will of our Divine Master may be gathered plainly enough, at least by those who are willing to show a reasonable respect to the witness of the early Church.

St. Luke, in the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, informs us, that our LORD was not taken up, until "after that He, through the HOLY GHOST, had given commandments unto the Apostles whom He had chosen;—being seen of them" at various times during as much as "forty days," and "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of GOD." Then, doubtless, He gave them instruction in what method and order to proceed, what kind of ministry to settle in His Church. Who would not wish to know what was the tenor of those conversations? But the HOLY GHOST, in His unsearchable wisdom, has not seen fit directly to put them on record: an omission which appears very significant, when compared with the minute register which the Gospels supply of many former discourses. So it is, that on the occasion, which would seem to promise most information concerning the nature of CHRIST's kingdom, instead of finding any report of *what our blessed* SAVIOUR *said*, we find a report of *what His Apostles did*. Their Acts and Letters take place of the desired memorial

of His parting instructions. Is not this a hint to us all, on authority which cannot safely be despised, that we must look to *the actual conduct and system of the early Church* for a true notion of the things pertaining to "the kingdom of God," of which our Lord then spake to His Apostles. However early, on minute points, partial errors may have crept in, is it not evident to common sense, that the system which we trace back in the Church to the very generation next following the Apostles, must be in all great points the very system enjoined by our Lord, and partially disclosed in the subsequent history of His servants?

It follows, that in order to make out our Saviour's will on any point relating to the discipline and proceedings of His Church, the first portion of Scripture to which our attention is directed is the Acts of the holy Apostles.

Now, the very first Act of the Apostles, after Christ was gone out of their sight, was that commemorated this day;—the ordination of Matthias in the room of the traitor Judas. That ordination is related very minutely. Every particular of it is full of instruction; but at present I wish to draw attention to one circumstance more especially; namely, the time when it occurred. It was contrived (if one may say so) exactly to fall within the very short interval which elapsed between the departure of our Lord and the arrival of the Comforter in His place: on that "little while," during which the Church was comparatively left alone in the world. Then it was that St. Peter rose and declared with authority, that the time was come for supplying the vacancy which Judas had made. "One," said he, "must be ordained;" and without delay they proceeded to the ordination. Of course, St. Peter must have had from our Lord express authority for this step. Otherwise it would seem most natural to defer a transaction so important until the unerring Guide, the Holy Ghost, should have come among them, as they knew He would in a few days. On the other hand, since the Apostles were eminently Apostles of our Incarnate Lord, since their very being, *as Apostles*, depended entirely on their personal mission from Him (which is the reason why catalogues are given of them, with such scrupulous care, in so many of the holy books):—in that regard one should naturally have expected that He Himself, before His departure, would have supplied the vacancy by personal designation.

But we see it was not His pleasure to do so. As the Apostles afterwards brought on the ordination sooner, so He had deferred it longer than might have been expected. Both ways it should seem as if there were a purpose of bringing the event within those ten days, during which, as I said, the Church was left to herself; left to exercise her faith and hope, much as Christians are left now, without any *miraculous* aid or extraordinary illumination from above. Then, at that moment of the New Testament history, in which the circumstances of believers corresponded most nearly to what they have been since miracles and inspiration ceased—just at that time it pleased our LORD that a fresh Apostle would be consecrated, with authority and commission as ample as the former enjoyed. In a word, it was His will that the eleven Disciples alone, not Himself personally, should name the successor of Judas; and that they chose the right person, He gave testimony very soon after, by sending His HOLY SPIRIT on St. Matthias, as richly as on St. John, St. James, or St. Peter.

Thus the simple consideration of the *time* when Matthias was ordained, confirms two points of no small importance to the well-being of CHRIST's kingdom on earth. First, it shows that whoever are regularly commissioned by the Apostles, our LORD will consider those persons as commissioned and ordained by Himself. Secondly, it proves that such power to ordain is independent of those apostolical functions, which may be properly called extraordinary and miraculous. It existed before those functions began; why then may it not still continue, however entirely they have passed away?

We must not pretend to be wise above what is written; but there is, I trust, nothing presumptuous or unscriptural in supposing that JESUS CHRIST, the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, purposely abstained from nominating St. Matthias in His life-time, in order that Christians in all times might understand that the ordained successors of the Apostles are as truly Bishops under Him, as ever the Apostles were themselves.

For this is the constant doctrine of the ancient Church, delivered in express terms by our LORD in the text, "*Ye have not chosen me*, but *I have chosen you*, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."

It may seem strange that our LORD should deem it necessary to guard His Disciples against such a notion as that they had chosen Him, rather than He them: called as they had been, when they least expected it, from their daily employments of fishermen, publicans, and the like. But "for our sakes, no doubt, this is written;" to check an error which CHRIST foresaw would too generally prevail in His Church, especially in these latter days, which pride themselves so much on light and liberty. The error I mean is, that of imagining that Church communion is a voluntary thing, which people may adopt or no, (I will not say *at their own pleasure*, though too many go as far as that, but) *as they seem to find it for the time most edifying*. Another kindred notion is, that the Christian ministry is also a voluntary thing; that there is no real difference between clergy and laity, any more than is enacted by the law of the land for mere decency and order's sake; but that otherwise a man who can and will do good as a clergyman, is to all intents and purposes clergyman enough.

These are not very uncommon notions. But take them at their best, and are they in effect any better than as if St. Paul and the other Apostles had considered themselves as choosing CHRIST, instead of being chosen by CHRIST? He who reasons so, is he not chargeable with setting up his own calculation against the declared will and system of our LORD?

Hear now, on the other hand, the very doctrine of the Church Apostolical. JESUS CHRIST, the chief Shepherd and Bishop, commits the pastoral office to whom He pleases; in the first place, to His Apostles, and after them, to all whom they, by the help of His ordinary grace, shall appoint; which latter proposition you have just heard clearly made out from the ordination of St. Matthias. Therefore, although there be many Bishops, yet the Episcopal office is but one. The lines of the true Catholic Church are drawn out, as the Psalmist says, to the ends of the world, over all lands; but trace them back, and they all meet in the same centre, JESUS CHRIST. Therefore it is *all one Church*, and not a thousand independent churches, as they would make it, who boast of choosing CHRIST, instead of humbly and thankfully acknowledging the choice which He has made of them, in that He has cast their lot within reach of His ministers and sacraments.

This view, so clearly deducible from the promise of our LORD,

and the conduct of His Apostles, is most unanswerably confirmed by the whole history of the Primitive Church. Every where the Bishops were the chief pastors, and the government and order of the Church was vested in them. To separate from them, except they were proved grossly heretical, was accounted schism. Why? Because it was universally understood, that the Bishops were the connecting chain which bound the successive generations of Christians to the first generation, the holy Apostles; nay, and to our LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself. For the believers of those days were too well instructed not to know that our SAVIOUR's promises were made to the Church *through the Apostles:* so that if they broke off their connection with the Apostles, they broke off their connection with CHRIST.

Would you hear some of the very words of those holy men of old? Take the following, which are part of a letter written by St. Ignatius, the friend of the chiefest Apostles, when he was on the verge of martyrdom. They are some of his last words, written to warn the friends for whom he was most ánxious, against the heresies which were springing up in the Church.

"By submitting yourself to your Bishop as to JESUS CHRIST, you convince me that you guide your lives by no rule of man's invention, but by the rule of JESUS CHRIST, who died for us, that ye, believing in His death, might escape altogether from death. It follows, of course, that in no part of your conduct ye separate yourselves from your Bishop: which thing also ye now practise."

No test could be shorter or more simple. "You are in communion with your Bishop, humbly receiving from him, or those by him deputed, the genuine word and Sacraments of JESUS CHRIST: therefore, I make no question but you are also in communion with our LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself; at least, as far as Church Privileges go; as far as I or man can judge."

Surely the holy martyr, St. Ignatius, was as good a judge of what Christian communion depends on, as any person can be supposed in our days. And we see that he judges of it, not by those tests which we now hear most insisted on; not by convictions, and emotions, and highly-wrought feelings; but by the simple fact of adherence to that system, which our LORD himself had established for our salvation. Now, we know from every page

of St. Ignatius, what his view of that system was. It was the system of Christian ordinances, administered by Bishops, with Priests and Deacons under them. That, in the mind of St. Ignatius, was the sure mark of the Church of God.

Nor was this a mere private opinion of his: it was rather the constant tradition of the Church Universal. What is very remarkable, it was the tradition not only of the sound part of the Church, but of the heretics also. In those early days, even those who corrupted the doctrine of the Church seldom or never dared to breathe any thing against the Apostolical Succession of her Bishops. To do so, if they possibly could, would have been greatly to their purpose; because one very plain argument by which their misrepresentations of doctrine used to be confuted, was by appealing to the traditional account of the same doctrines, preserved in many of the most famous Churches, by means of the regular succession of the Bishops. Some of the Fathers thus reckon up the Bishops of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, for more than three hundred years, from the time of the Apostles, and are thereby enabled to trace back as far the true interpretation of certain hard places of Scripture, relating to the grea truths of the Gospel. The heretics who disputed those truths, no doubt, would have been too happy, could they have proved that the chain of tradition wanted a link; that the succession from the Apostles was not clearly made out, or that being made out, it signified nothing. But the ground they used to take was quite different. They never dreamed of denying the *past* succession: it was too certainly known to be denied; but they took very great care to secure a *future* succession for themselves. They hardly ever broke off from the Church, until they had got some Bishop to patronize their heresy: through whom they might continue the Apostolical commission in a line of pastors of their own.

Thus as well the enemies of the Church as her friends bore witness in those early days to a truth which too many of both seem now agreed on forgetting: That Episcopal Authority is the very bond which unites Christians to each other and to Christ: so that it was apparently a kind of proverb with them, *Without the Bishop do nothing*

What is more, the teaching of the Primitive Church brought this matter home to every man's own soul, not only on the

general ground of submission to all our LORD's ordinances, but because the bread and wine in the Eucharist was not accounted the true Sacrament of CHRIST, without CHRIST's warrant given to the person administering: which warrant, the Fathers well knew, could only be had through His Apostles and their successors.

Hear again the same St. Ignatius. "Let that LORD's Supper be counted a LORD's Supper indeed, which is ministered by the Bishop, or by one having his commission." Observe, Ignatius, the friend of the Apostles, reckons the Sacrament no Sacrament, if the consecrating minister want the Bishop's commission. Could St. Ignatius possibly mistake the mind of the Apostles on that point, he who had conversed familiarly with them at the time when the Church was used to "continue *daily* in breaking of bread?"

And with him agreed the whole Church of GOD for the first fifteen hundred years: knowing that when our LORD said, "Do this in remembrance of Me," His Apostles only were present; therefore none but they and their deputies could be said to have His warrant for blessing that bread and cup. And this is a matter pertaining to each man's salvation. For that bread and cup are the appointed mean, whereby the faithful are to partake of CHRIST's Body and Blood offered for their sins.

Can any devout man, considering this, reckon it a matter of small moment, whether the minister with whom he communicates be a minister by apostolical succession or no? In the judgment of the Church, it makes no less difference than this: Whether the bread and cup which he partakes of shall be to him CHRIST's Body and Blood or no. I repeat it: in the judgment of the Church, the Eucharist administered without apostolical commission, may to pious minds be a very edifying ceremony, but it is not that blessed thing which our SAVIOUR graciously meant it to be: it is not "verily and in deed taking and receiving" the Body and Blood of Him, our Incarnate LORD.

Even as St. Paul seems to intimate, when he so pointedly asks the Corinthians, "The cup of blessing *which we bless*, is it not the Communion of the Blood of CHRIST? The bread *which we break*, is it not the Communion of the Body of CHRIST?" Why such a stress on the words, "*which we bless*," "*which we break*;" except because the Corinthians knew (and they could only know

by Apostolical teaching), that *the agency of the Apostles* in blessing and breaking was needed, to assure us that the holy signs really convey the thing signified?

Thus you see every thing concurs; the ordination of St. Matthias, the promise of our LORD, the hints found elsewhere in holy Scripture, the express laws of the Universal Church, the constant doctrine of the friends of the Apostles;—all agree to show that Communion with GOD incarnate, such Communion as He offers in His holy Supper, cannot be depended on without an Apostolical Ministry.

To think otherwise is the error of those who, mixing up human inventions with the everlasting Gospel, take upon them to "choose CHRIST," instead of humbly owning themselves "chosen by Him," and labouring to bear fruit accordingly.

But still more fatal will be *our* error, if, having this high privilege, we cause it to be reproached by our abuse or negligent using. We, by GOD's blessing, are among those who, through an Apostolical Ministry, have constant access to the Body and Blood of our REDEEMER. What if we be found no more exemplary, no humbler, no more consistent in our piety, than those whose possession of the means of grace is so much more questionable than ours? There is a prophetic warning against such: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." There is also a yet more awful warning from Him who will come to be our Judge: "Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

BISHOP WILSON'S MEDITATIONS ON HIS SACRED OFFICE.

No. V.—THURSDAY.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

Question from the Office of Consecration.—WILL YOU MAINTAIN AND SET FORWARD, AS MUCH AS IN YOU LIETH, QUIETNESS, LOVE AND PEACE, AMONG ALL MEN; AND SUCH AS BE UNQUIET, DISOBEDIENT, AND CRIMINOUS WITHIN YOUR DIOCESE, CORRECT AND PUNISH, ACCORDING TO SUCH AUTHORITY AS YOU HAVE BY GOD'S WORD, AND AS TO YOU SHALL BE COMMITTED BY THE ORDINANCES OF THIS REALM[1]?—*Ans.* I WILL SO DO, BY THE HELP OF GOD.

O GOD of peace and love, make me, thy minister, a messenger and instrument of peace to this people to whom I am sent; that by thy gracious assistance I may root out all *strife* and *variance*, *hatred* and *malice*, and that this Church and Nation may enjoy a blessed tranquillity. Bless the discipline of this Church in my hands, and make it effectual for the conviction of wicked men and gainsayers. Assist me, by thy good SPIRIT, that I may apply a proper cure to every disorder; that I may reprove with *mildness*, censure with *equity*, and punish with *compassion*.

O merciful GOD, who wouldest not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live, bring into the right way all such as are gone astray from Thy commandments. Vouchsafe unto all penitents (*and especially unto all such as are now under the censures of the Church*), a true sense of their crimes, true

[1] This can never be looked upon as any limitation of the power received from Christ, but only as directing the exercise thereof, as to the manner, form, and circumstance.—BP. WILSON.

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repentance for them, and thy gracious pardon, that their souls may be saved in the day of the LORD JESUS. Amen.

Church Discipline.

However the Church be in some respects incorporated with the commonwealth in a Christian state, yet its fundamental rights remain distinct from it; of which this is one of the chief—to receive into, and to exclude out of the Church, such persons which, according to the laws of the Christian society, are fit to be taken in, or shut out.

And when temporal laws interpose, it is temporal punishment only, which they design to inflict or set aside.—*Bishop Stillingfleet.*

Ezek. ii. 6. "And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words; thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear."

2 Cor. xiii. 10. "Lest I should use sharpness, according to the power," *(namely, of binding and loosing,)* "which GOD hath given me to edification, and not to destruction."

1 Tim. i. 20. "Whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may not blaspheme." O admirable use and command of Satan! He is GOD's enemy, and yet does Him service; and an adversary to man, and yet helps to save him. He is the author of blasphemy, and yet teacheth not to blaspheme. That is, One that is stronger than he directs his malice to ends which he did not intend. Satan is set on work to take him down by terror and despair whom before he had tempted to sin. But while Satan thinks to drive him to destruction by despair, GOD stops his course, when the sinner is sufficiently humbled; and then, as it was with CHRIST, Satan is dismissed, and Angels come and minister unto him.—*Rouse.*

What great man shall we now find, who will not take it ill to be reproved? and yet David, a prince and favourite of GOD, when he was reproved, even by a subject, did not turn away in a rage, but confessed his fault, and repented truly of his sin.—*St. Ambros. ap. David.*

The very office of Consecration, so often confirmed by Acts of Parliament, does warrant every Bishop, in the clearest and most express terms, to claim authority, by the Word of GOD, to exer-

cise all manner of spiritual discipline within his own diocese.—*Codex Jur. Eccl. Angl.* p. 18.

Men should be *persuaded*, not *forced*, to forsake their sins; because God rewards not those who, through necessity, forsake their sins; but such as do so voluntarily.—*Chrysost.*

Be steady and fearless in the discharge of your duty, without failing in that respect which is due to higher powers.

Grant, O God, that I may have an eye to duty only, that I may fear no temporal evil, and be concerned only lest I should not in all respects please Thee my God.

Deut. i. 17. "The judgment is God's." As this should oblige all people to be afraid of a judgment or censure passed by men commissioned by God, so it should make us very careful that our judgment be such as is worthy of God, and agreeable to His will and Word.

1 Cor. xvi. 22. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." Here is a positive direction to the Church to excommunicate all such as plainly discover that they have no love for Jesus Christ,—who are scandalous or profane.

Since we are to give an account of the souls committed to our charge, we cannot be debarred of making use of all the means enjoined us by the Gospel to reduce sinners.

We ought to be thankful for the favours which we have received from religious princes; but if our benefactors require of us what is inconsistent with our trust, we then know whom we are to obey.

2 John 10, 11. "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed,—for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." Not to show our abhorrence of sin, is to consent to it. Men do not sufficiently consider the guilt of this, when they converse with notorious offenders without scruple. They partake with them in their sins; they harden the sinner; they forget the fidelity they owe to God and to his laws, and greatly hazard their own salvation.

Excommunication was never pronounced except where the case was desperate, by the obstinacy of the party, in refusing admonition, and to submit to discipline.—*Penit. Disc.* p. 41, 42, 75, 120.

Luke xv. 22. "The Scribes and the Pharisees murmured,

saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." On some occasions, we ought to avoid sinners, for fear of being corrupted,—or to put them to shame, in order to their conversion. But to converse with them, as our LORD did, in order to teach them their duty, to encourage them in the way of piety, &c. this is Godlike.

Mark viii. 33. "Get thee behind me, Satan.—Thou savourest not the things that be of GOD, but the things that be of man." How dangerous is tenderness in matters of salvation! To spare a penitent, is to ruin him by a fatal kindness.

How perilous is the government of the Church, wherein a man becomes guilty of those things which he does not hinder! Rev. ii. 20. "I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferedst that woman Jezebel to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication," &c.—2 Cor. x. 4. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through GOD, to the pulling down of strongholds." We surely mistake the spirit of the Gospel, when we would establish and defend the Church by human policy, and carnal means, by friendship of great men, credit, reputation, splendour, riches, &c. GOD will have us to use other sort of arms, namely,—patience, humility, meekness, prayers, suffering, and spiritual censures, to which GOD will join His own Almighty power.

All mankind are agreed that human legislatures can only dispense and make laws in cases purely human.

(To be continued.)

OXFORD,
The Feast of St. Matthias.

[NEW EDITION.]

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

SERMONS FOR SAINTS' DAYS AND HOLIDAYS.

(No. 2. THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.)

"*Though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*"—Galatians i. 8.

THIS day, though named from the Blessed Virgin, is one of the greatest festivals of our SAVIOUR. And, therefore, in former times the Church of England reckoned it the beginning of her year; thereby especially giving intimation, that she would have the whole year dedicated to JESUS CHRIST. For this day, with which she began it, marks the time of His gracious incarnation; upon which all that we have or hope, both in Heaven and in earth, entirely depends. For, as St. Paul argues concerning another link in the chain of GOD's mysterious mercy, if *Christ* were not truly made man, then He did not truly die for our sins: if He did not, then was He not raised again: and "if *Christ* be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." Such was the adorable will of GOD ALMIGHTY, in His counsels for redeeming lost mankind. There was to be no communion between GOD and man, except through the everlasting SON, Himself both GOD and man. This is the foundation laid from the beginning, besides which no man can lay any other. Men may think little of it, but the evil spirits know it well; and accordingly, they have busied themselves from the beginning in nothing so much as in perplexing the minds of the unwary with regard to the incarnation of our LORD and SAVIOUR, and our communion with GOD through Him. Church history is little else than a record on the one hand, of their unceasing endeavours to corrupt the Faith on these two points; on the other, of His watchful Providence, meeting and baffling them, in every age, by ways of His own,

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prepared also from the beginning, for their confusion and our trial.

One of the very chiefest of these precautions was His appointing persons in His Church to watch the treasure of Divine Truth, to try and assay, by comparison with it, whatever doctrines from time to time became current, and to give notice, with all authority, wherever they found God's mark wanting. To mention no other places; our Lord Himself, in the text which I considered on St. Matthias' day, expresses Himself in this manner. "I ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, *and that your fruit should remain.*" The Apostles were to take precautions, not only that their ministry might be fruitful for the time, but also that it might flourish and abound for ever. Those who work duly under their commission, may in virtue of this promise expect more abiding results from their labours, than any, however zealous, who may venture to take this honour to themselves. Not to forfeit this privilege, the holy Apostles instituted a regular custom, according to which, in all future times the faithful might be warned against heretical doctrines. When any new point arose, regarding which the judgment of the Church was doubtful, reference was made to the chief pastors or Bishops, solemnly assembled to consider the subject; and they having thoroughly examined it, proclaimed an anathema, i. e. a sentence of excommunication, against the teachers and maintainers of dangerous error. For example; the very first controversy which arose in the Church related to the question whether the whole law of Moses ought to be observed as a condition of the Christian covenant. It was settled by the Apostles' meeting at Jerusalem, as you read in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts. And, being settled, whoever contradicted it, whoever added either Moses' law or any thing else to the terms of salvation by Christ, and thereby began to preach a new Gospel, other than that received at first, you hear in the text what St. Paul says of him. "Though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed:" let him be anathema, cut off from the communion of Christian people; not allowed to pray or receive the sacrament, in the assemblies of Christian men. Let him be, to those who obey Christ, "as a heathen man and a Publican." Thus speaks the Apostle of those who should be

so presumptuous as to teach the Jewish fable of the necessity of circumcision after the decision of the Holy Spirit by the Apostolical Church had been published. For it was published, with the utmost care, by letters and messengers sent to all the Churches; and being so, could not be disobeyed without wilful arrogancy and irreverence. Thus St. Paul and the rest of the Apostles made known to the Church in all ages their right, and the right of the Bishops, their successors, to mark out such heretics as might arise from time to time, and put the faithful on their guard against them. And thus quite down from the time of our Lord, the Apostolical succession of pastors has continued, as a divinely-appointed guard, meant to secure the integrity of Apostolical doctrine.

Let us, as on this day we are bound, consider more especially what we owe to that holy succession, in respect of that on which, as Christians, *our all*, as we cannot but know, depends: I mean the true doctrine of the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour. It may be positively said, that under Providence we owe our inheritance of this saving doctrine to the chain of rightly-ordained Bishops, connecting our times with the time of its first promulgation. This will be more clearly seen, if the two following statements are considered; neither of which can be reasonably doubted by any one who has looked much into Church history.

1. In ancient times the system of Apostolical, i. e. of episcopal anathemas, was the Church's main safeguard against the misinterpretations of Scripture, which from time to time threatened to deprive her children of their faith in God the Son, made man for our salvation.

2. Wheresoever, in modern times, the Apostolical succession has been given up, there the true doctrine of our Lord's incarnation has been often corrupted, always in jeopardy.

These propositions are of course too large to be fully made out in the narrow limits of a sermon. But a few instances of each will show what is meant, and will serve to draw serious minds to reverential thought on the whole subject.

I. Even during the Apostolic age, there were many, who, under pretence of purer doctrine, refused to confess "Jesus Christ come in the flesh." This we know from the later books of the New Testament; especially from the writings of St. John. And by the records of the two next generations we learn that

the corruptions were of two kinds, apparently opposite. Some, out of pretended reverence for our LORD's Divine nature, refused to own Him made very man for us. They would have it, that His blessed body was no more than a dream or vision, and all that He did here, a scene as it were enacted by the will of the ALMIGHTY to make an impression on our minds. Others, on the contrary, denied His Divine being: pretending, no doubt, extraordinary reverence towards GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY, they would not hear the Gospel doctrine that He who is One with the FATHER, had vouchsafed to become one of us. They would have it that the crucified JESUS was either a mere human saint, or at best a sort of good angel. Against both these blasphemous errors St. John himself had given warning, pronouncing as it were the Church's anathema beforehand. "There are many deceivers entered into the world, who confess not JESUS CHRIST come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an anti-Christ. . . . Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of CHRIST, hath not GOD. He that abideth in the doctrine of CHRIST, he hath both the FATHER and the SON. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him GOD speed. For he that biddeth him GOD speed is partaker of his evil deeds." However, in the next generation after St. John, this evil leaven was still found working in the Church, and the false teachers of both sorts still had the boldness to plead Scripture, which somehow they contrived to wrest and pervert in their own way. How were they to be answered? How was it to be made manifest that their interpretation of Scripture was wrong? It was done by appealing to that interpretation, which had the warrant of the Apostles themselves. How was that interpretation known? By its preservation in the several Churches which had been founded by the Apostles,—Rome, Corinth, Jerusalem, and the rest. How had the right interpretation of Scripture been preserved in each of those places? By the succession of Bishops, each in turn handing over to the Bishop that followed him what he had himself learned of his predecessors. The defenders of Evangelical truth reasoned as follows:—

"The tradition of the Apostles, made known in all the world, may be clearly discerned in every Church, by those who are willing to behold things as they are; nay, and we are able to enu-

merate those whom the Apostles ordained to be Bishops in the several Churches, along with their successors, even down to our time, none of whom ever taught or imagined any such doctrine as the heretics in their frenzy maintain. If such interpretations had been known to the Apostles, in the manner of hidden mysteries, reserved to be taught apart to the most perfect, surely, of all others, they to whom the Churches themselves were committed would have had these mysteries committed to them also. For it was the Apostles' wish to have their successors, and those entrusted to bear sway in their stead, complete and unblameable in every thing; whose correct demeanour was sure to be the Church's blessing; their fall, her extreme calamity. It were too long, however, at present to enumerate the chains of Bishops in all the Churches. Look at one of the greatest and ancientest, well known to all, the Church founded and established at Rome, by two most glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul. What tradition she received from the Apostles, and what faith, to be preached to all men, we are able to ascertain; the same having come down to us by the unbroken series and succession of her Bishops. And thus we confound all those who in any way draw wrong conclusions, through self complacency, or vain glory, or blindness of heart and evil prejudice. For to this Church of Rome, because of the eminent dignity" (of that city), "it cannot be but that other Churches resort, I mean believers, from every quarter; and in the same Church, among those so resorting, the tradition of the Apostles has been preserved entire." Thus speaks the holy Bishop and martyr Irenæus, who lived within twenty years of St. John himself; and to make good his words, he proceeds to reckon up the Bishops of Rome, from the first, appointed by the two great Apostles, to the time of his writing—twelve in number. "By this order and succession," says Irenæus, "the tradition inherited by the Church from the Apostles, and the substance of their preaching, has come down safe to our times."

Thus wrote Irenæus, living in Gaul. And in like manner, not long after him, Tertullian, writing against the same heretics in Africa, and defending that doctrine of our LORD's true Incarnation, which is the very life of the world:—"The heretics," says he, "themselves plead Scripture. How are we to know whether their's is the true sense or our's? The natural way is to look and see whether either of the two can be traced back to

the time of the Apostles. What CHRIST revealed to them they preached; what they preached, must be known by the testimony of those Churches which they themselves founded. If there be any heresies claiming Apostolical antiquity, let them give account of the first beginning of their Churches; let them unfold the roll of their Bishops, so continued by succession from the beginning, as that their first Bishop shall have received ordination from some Apostle or disciple of the Apostles; such a disciple, I mean, as went out from them. For thus do the Churches which are truly Apostolical make out, as it were, their genealogical tables: the Church of Smyrna vouching as her first Prelate Polycarp, there established by St. John; the Church of Rome, Clement, in like manner ordained by St. Peter; and the other Churches no less have each some person to name, fixed by the Apostles, as Bishops, in each respectively; through whom each derives the seed of Apostolical communion." Now, as Tertullian goes on to argue, "this unbroken connexion with the Apostles was a strong pledge of their inheriting sound Apostolical doctrine too, except it could be proved that their doctrine had varied at any time. For, as the Apostles must have agreed with each other in their teaching, so neither could Apostolical men have put forth doctrines contrary to the Apostles; except they were such as had revolted from the Apostles, and might be detected by the diversity of their doctrine." And this would hold in each following age, till some actual variation took place. And if it held in respect of any one Church, how much more in respect of the combined evidence of the independent Churches in all parts of the world, each producing their several lines of succession, terminating in several Apostles or Apostolical men, and each agreeing (for all material points) in the same traditionary doctrine and interpretation of the Scriptures! For instance, when on some occasion, as the same Tertullian relates, the Churches of Rome and Africa "interchanged the watch-word," or, as we might say, "compared notes;" what an encouragement and confirmation must it not have proved to both, to find themselves mutually agreed, without previous concert, in their views of Scripture truth, and of the system established by the Apostles!

By such arguments in the first age were the enemies of CHRIST's Incarnation put to silence. It is plain, so far, how well the

Episcopal succession answered the purpose assigned to it by our LORD, of providing that the fruit of Apostolical teaching should remain ; and how vigorously the Church's anathema, first pronounced by St. John, was followed up, to the confusion of those who "abode not in the doctrine of CHRIST."

Still more remarkable to the same purpose are the examples of the following age. There, too, we find the Apostolical succession the main out-work of Apostolical doctrine ; the truth of CHRIST's Incarnation defended, not as in the former age by single writers appealing to the long lines of Bishops who had taught it, but by the Bishops of the Church themselves, synodically met to pass sentence on the questionable teaching of some of their colleagues. Being so met, they represented not simply the judgment of the contemporary Churches, but also that of each former generation of Christians, on the great mystery in dispute. Each Bishop taking part in a synodical decision on those cardinal points of the faith, was understood as avouching besides his own opinion, the traditionary interpretation likewise which his Church had inherited from her first founder. A very little thought will show how greatly this adds to the support furnished by such meetings to orthodox and saving truth. A convention of learned theologians agreeing, in their views of Scripture, would, no doubt, carry great authority. A council of Bishops, in the third century, was such a convention, and a great deal more : it was a collection of harmonious *independent* testimonies to the way in which the writers of Scripture had originally intended their writings to be understood.

The advantage of so meeting and comparing their respective traditions, was particularly evident in those cases in which any member of their own sacred order had countenanced, or seemed to countenance, heretical opinions. For instances of the kind occur in the age now under consideration ; the one displaying in a peculiar way the scrupulous watchfulness of the early Church: the other her uncompromising firmness ;—both in vindication of the pure Gospel of GOD manifest in the flesh.

The first is the case of Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, one of the most famous Prelates of his time. The heresy of Sabellius had sprung up in his province, which, under pretence of magnifying our blessed LORD, confounded His Person with that of the ALMIGHTY FATHER, and so in fact denied the whole economy of

Salvation: maintaining that the FATHER himself was incarnate; that He appeared on earth as the SON, and suffered on the cross for us. Refuting these, the holy Bishop had argued from those expressions of Scripture which represent our LORD in his human nature, as the work or creature of GOD the FATHER. "The Incarnate SON," said he, "is not the same with the FATHER, as the tree is not the same with the husbandman, nor the ship with the builder." Expressions surely justifiable enough, since what they affirm is found almost word for word in our LORD's own discourses. "I am the true *Vine*, and my Father is the *Husbandman*." However, the expressions were misunderstood, although from St. Dionysius' own report it should seem that he had carefully guarded them by the context; it was generally reported that he had used language derogatory to the Divine honour of our LORD. A synod met at Rome to examine the matter, on behalf of which the then Bishop of Rome, also named Dionysius, wrote to the Bishop of Alexandria, requesting an explanation; which he gave to the full satisfaction of the whole Church; summing up his doctrine in these remarkable words: "Of the names used by me to express the Divine Persons, there is none which can be separated or divided from the other to which it is related. Thus, suppose I speak of the FATHER; before I add the term 'SON,' I have implied His existence, by using the term 'FATHER.' I add the term SON; though I had not mentioned the FATHER, assuredly the idea of Him would have been comprised in that of the SON: I join to these the 'HOLY GHOST,' but at the same time I annex the thought of the fountain *from* whom and the channel *by* whom He proceeds;" calling him, as it seems, the SPIRIT of the FATHER and the SON. "Thus, on the one hand, we do as it were expand the UNITY, without division, into a TRINITY of Persons; on the other hand, we gather the TRINITY, without diminution, into an UNITY of substance." This noble confession of a perfect faith we owe to the friendly remonstrance of the assembled Bishops; and surely the advantage is great, of such a standing guard, in enabling the Church not only to recognise and repel her enemies, but also to know for certain those friends about whom otherwise she might stand in doubt. If, when the excellent Bishop Taylor published his 'Liberty of Prophesying,' there had been a council of primitive Bishops at hand, to warn him authoritatively of the evil consequences which here-

tics would afterwards draw from some of his positions, the Church would, in all probability, have been a gainer in two ways: first, what he had there put incautiously would have been corrected, and the sting taken out: and next, we might so much the more unreservedly use his authority on other points.

But to proceed with the third century:—Very soon after this friendly debate with Dionysius, both he, and the Bishops who had remonstrated with him, and indeed the great body of the Orthodox Prelacy, were called on to maintain the truth of our Lord's incarnation in another case, in which all remonstrance had failed. This was the case of Paul of Samosata, himself also Bishop and Pastor of one of the most renowned sees, Antioch; the only Church which at that time could compare in dignity with Rome and Alexandria. To expose the errors of so high a functionary, to call him to account, and finally, he continuing obstinate, to depose him, was the work of no mean authority; especially as he had the support of a strong political party, and used many arts which in all times have been found popular and effective. It appears by the report of the synod of Bishops assembled to inquire into his cause, that he delighted to resemble men of much secular business; to have people pressing on him; to be reading letters and dictating answers as he went along the public street. Again, in his preaching, he constantly aimed at making a show of ingenuity, and producing a splendid effect for the time. His action was violent and showy, and he encouraged in the very Church, the rude expressions of applause, shaking of handkerchiefs, and the like, which were practised in the theatres. The fathers, and their interpretations of Scripture, he took all opportunities of disparaging, praising himself at their expense, more like one lecturing, or telling fortunes for hire, than like a genuine Christian Bishop. It is clear at once, what view such a person would be likely to take of the high and mysterious doctrines of our religion. It is no matter of surprise to find him maintaining, in opposition to our Lord's own words, that Christ was from beneath, and not from above; that he was merely a human Prophet, not the Son of God come down from Heaven; that the wisdom of the Almighty dwelt in Him as it had dwelt in former Prophets, only in more abundant measure. In short, he held the same doctrine as those who now call themselves Unitarians. And there is good reason to think, that he was favoured and protected

by the ruling power in the state. Zenobia, who at that time exercised imperial sway in Syria with the title of Queen of the East, was strongly addicted to a kind of deistical Judaism, the same in substance with his Unitarian opinions. These few particulars may give some idea of the peril in which the orthodox faith and the true Church lay then at Antioch. But even under the most untoward circumstances, the Bishops of the neighbouring sees assembled; and their interference, by the blessing of God, was effectual in preserving the charge from apostasy. It is worth observing how well their proceedings answer to the line marked out in such cases by our Lord himself, in His charter of Church censures. First, they send Paul a brotherly expostulation, telling him his fault between them and him alone. The first sentence of this letter is much to be noticed, not only for its calm and gentle tone, but also, for its very distinct reference to the succession of doctrine from the Apostles as a test of truth. "Health in Christ:—We have just now, by discourse with each other, satisfied ourselves of our mutual faith. Now that every one's mind may be clearly disclosed, and all disputed questions more completely set at rest, we have thought good hereby to set forth in writing the faith which we have received from the beginning, and hold fast, handed down as it is and safely guarded in the Catholic and holy Church, preached even to this day, through succession by the blessed Apostles, those who were even eye-witnesses and ministers of the word; this faith we have decreed to set forth out of the Law and the Prophets, and the New Testament." Then having gone through a large body of Scripture evidence for the most High Godhead of our Lord and Saviour, they conclude:—"These things, a few out of very many, we have set down, desiring to know whether you think and teach as we do, and requesting you to signify to us your approbation or disapprobation of what we have written." This epistle was followed up by various conferences: but Paul yet refusing to be reclaimed, the Bishops of Syria went on to act upon the remaining part of our Saviour's enactment in such cases: they assembled, to the number of seventy or eighty, and called on him to "hear the Church:" which, when he refused, they formally deposed him, and separated him from the body of Christian people, pronouncing on him the following sentence:—"Him, thus setting himself against God, and refusing to give way, we have been compelled to excommu-

nicate, and in his room to set another as Bishop over this Catholic Church; by the providence of God, as we believe." This they made known to the Bishops of Rome and Alexandria, and all the world over, that they, acquiescing in the sentence pronounced, might lose no time in writing to the new Bishop of Antioch letters of communion and acknowledgment, as the manner of the churches then was; directing their letter, "To the Bishops of Rome and Alexandria, and all our fellow servants throughout the world, whether Bishops, Priests, or Deacons, and to the whole Catholic Church under Heaven." By the co-operation of those distant Bishops, the sentence was finally and effectually confirmed; the Church of Antioch delivered from her unfaithful shepherd, and the verity of our Lord's Divine Nature passed on, as a precious deposit, to other councils and other times.

These few brief examples,—not, it will be observed, standing apart, but taken as what they truly are, specimens of a great and general system, continually in action throughout the Christian world;—these few examples may serve to show how close a connexion naturally subsists between sound doctrine and apostolical succession in the ministry. We have seen that the one, in those primitive ages, was constantly appealed to as no slight guarantee for the other. It could not well be otherwise, as long as the successors of the Apostles did their duty, originally in ordaining none but orthodox men, and afterwards in watching and censuring (if need were) the most exalted even of their own colleagues, on sufficient proof of defection on their part.

Two facts are quite indisputable: *the first*, that in those ages the Bishops and Pastors were considered as the chosen apostolical guardians of the true faith; *the other*, that they really acted as such. Does not the conclusion irresistibly follow, that such Providence intended them to be? And can any one, knowing these circumstances, read the peculiarly significant promises at sundry times addressed by our Lord to His Apostles, and not perceive in the Episcopal succession the appropriate fulfilment of those promises? For instance, "I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." "Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

We have then from Scripture, the consolation of believing,

that as long as we reverence and uphold the Apostolical ministry, we are in our line and measure "labouring together" with God himself. We are so far doing our humble part in that system which the all-wise Redeemer has ordained to be the human, visible, secondary instrument of guarding and propagating those truths, on which our communion with Him depends.

This will be seen yet more clearly, on proceeding to examine the *doctrinal* results, such as they appear on the whole in those Churches, which from error or necessity have parted with the Apostolical succession. This must be attempted on some future occasion.

For the present, reverting to that ineffable mystery, from which on this day especially all our devout thoughts should begin, and in which they should end, I would only ask one question. *What will be the feelings of a Christian, particularly of a Christian pastor, should he find hereafter that in slighting or discouraging Apostolical claims and views (be the temptation what it may), he has really been helping the evil spirit to unsettle men's faith in* THE INCARNATION OF THE SON OF GOD ?

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

BISHOP WILSON'S MEDITATIONS ON HIS SACRED OFFICE.

No. V.—THURSDAY.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

(Continued.)

There is a public absolution, which is no more than a relaxation of a censure. There is no relation betwixt that and the absolution of sins.

God ratifies in heaven the judgments of His ministers on earth, when they judge by the rules prescribed by His Word.

Whenever Church discipline meets with discountenance, impieties of all kinds are sure to get head and abound. And impieties, unpunished, do always draw down judgments.

The same Jesus Christ who appointed baptism, for the receiving men into His Church and family, has appointed excommunication to shut such out as are judged unworthy to continue in it.

Matt. xviii. 15, &c. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." So

that if baptism be a blessing, excommunication is a real punishment: there being the same authority for excommunication as for baptism. And if men ridicule it, they do it at the peril of their souls.

In short, this authority is necessary, if it is necessary to preserve the honour of religion. It is appointed by JESUS CHRIST. The ends proposed by it are, to reform wicked men, and to remove scandals. If the sentence is duly executed, the offender is really deprived of the ordinary means of salvation. It is indeed a sentence passed by men, but by men commissioned by GOD Himself; that is, by the HOLY GHOST.

The authority of CHRIST is to be respected in the meanest of His ministers.

Excommunication, the most dreadful punishment which a Christian can suffer, becomes less feared than it ought to be, through the countenance which excommunicated persons meet with, contrary to the express command of GOD, "With such a one, no not to eat."

A true penitent will be willing to bear the shame of his sins (where he has given offence) before men, that he may escape the confusion of them hereafter. But then he ought to know, that to submit to the outward part of penance, is not to submit to GOD, unless it proceed from the fear and love of GOD.

A man may see his sin, confess it, abhor it, and yet be a false penitent. Judas did all this. What he wanted was the grace of GOD, to see the mercy of GOD, as well as His justice.

Those who are first to lead men into sinful courses, seldom trouble themselves to recover them out of them. The ministers of CHRIST must do it, or they must die in their sin.

Mark v. 4. "And they laughed him to scorn." O, my Lord and Master! let me not be driven from my duty, by the infidelity and scoffs of the world.

How desperate soever the condition of a sinner may appear, we must neither insult over it, nor despair of his conversion.

A person who has offended and scandalized others by his sins, ought, before he be admitted to the peace of the Church, and to receive the Sacrament, to give some good ground of assurance, by a sober life, that he is a true penitent.

Mark vi. 1. "Shake off the dust under your feet, for a testimony against them." JESUS CHRIST permits not His Apostles to avenge themselves by their Apostolical power, nor even to desire that He should do it; but to leave their cause to GOD, with full confidence in Him.

Luke xix. 8. "And if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." The judgment, which, of his own accord, this penitent passes upon himself, will condemn those who reject all the remedies offered, and all methods made use of, for their conversion, and who will not make the least atonement for their crimes. Men show very plainly that they love sin, when they will not suffer any one to put a stop to it, to remove the occasions thereof; and to shame, to reprove, and to punish the sinner. This is a sin which draws after it great judgments.

If a pastor hopes to do his duty without reproving the world, (without testifying that the works thereof are evil; John vii. 7.) or to reprove it without being hated by it, he will deceive himself; he may carry it fair with men, but will be condemned by JESUS CHRIST.

John viii. 7. "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone." They whose duty it is to punish offenders, should take great care not to be influenced by pride, hypocrisy, passion, false zeal, or malice; but to punish with reluctancy; with compassion, as having a sense of their own misery and weakness, which, perhaps, render them more guilty in the sight of GOD. Let Ecclesiastical Judges always remember, that the HOLY GHOST, to whom it belongs to bind and loose, never makes Himself the minister of the passions of men.

John xii. 43. "They loved the praise of men more than the glory of GOD." And this is the cause that men count it more shameful to acknowledge their crimes than it was to be guilty of them.

We must never insult a sinner; but, without extenuating his sin, we must comfort him, by showing him the good which GOD may bring out of it.

Acts viii. 3. "As for Saul, he made havock of the Church." The designs of GOD toward Saul should teach us not to despair

of any man's conversion, but to pray for it, and to use our best endeavours, instead of being angry, and using them ill.

Acts ix. 9. "And Saul was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." JESUS CHRIST Himself, in this instance, teaches His ministers not to be too hasty in receiving penitents, but to let them fast and pray, and bear the sense of their sin, and of their bad condition, before they be reconciled. It teaches penitents to fast and pray, and to bear with patience the fruit of their own doings.

Acts xix. 18. "Many that believed came and confessed their deeds," &c. The Spirit of Grace always inclines men to *confess* their evil deeds, and humble themselves for their sins. There could not be a more shameful one than dealing with the devil, &c. yet this did not hinder them,—or from sacrificing the most valuable things that had been instruments in their wickedness. This is a proof of a true conversion, &c.

The fall of others, is for us a great instruction, and a lesson which we ought to study, not in order to insult our neighbour, but to fear for, and amend, ourselves.

Let us not despise any sinner. GOD has sometimes very great designs in relation to those who are at present most opposite to Him.

To reprove, when persons are not in a proper disposition for amendment, would be to give both them and ourselves trouble without any prospect of advantage.

To make reproof beneficial, they to whom it is given should see that it does not proceed from humour, or from a design to vex them, but from a true zeal and love for their souls.

A true charity will never insult those that are gone astray, but will use the greatest sinners mildly, lest they should be driven to despair by too great severity.

The Church forgives sins "in the person of CHRIST." (2 Cor. ii. 10.) She remits the temporal punishment of them also, because CHRIST is the Sovereign High Priest, and because it belongs to GOD alone to recede from the strictness of His justice, in what manner He thinks fit. An ecclesiastical governor should endeavour to preserve discipline, and the esteem of his people, at the same time, by acts of tenderness, &c.

2 Cor. x. 8. "For though I should boast of my authority, (which the LORD hath given us for edification, and not for destruction,) I should not be ashamed." It is necessary, sometimes, to extol the dignity of our office. N. B. Pastors are appointed by CHRIST to edify the Church; they must, therefore, be honoured and obeyed.

The disorders which a good pastor observes in his flock, will always be matter of humiliation to him, because he will always impute them to himself. A pastor, a priest, who does not, with tears and supplications, bewail the sins of his people, cannot call himself their mediator with GOD.

It is the greatest comfort of a good pastor, to feel himself obliged to use nothing but good advice, and the mild part only of his authority; but when that will not do, he must "use sharpness;" but still, with this view, that it be for their edification, not for their destruction.

It seldom happens that great men, whether clergy or laity, reform their lives, because they seldom meet with persons of courage to oppose them, or to tell them of their faults. A Bishop who is not restrained by any earthly engagements, will not spare any man whose conduct is prejudicial to the faith.

Gal. v. 12. "I would they were even cut off which trouble you." To wish shame, or some temporal evil, for the salvation of our neighbour's soul, is not contrary to charity. It seems, matters were come to a great height of evil, when St. Paul was forced to wish that to be done, which he did not, in prudence, think fit to do.

Ecclus. viii. 5. "Reproach not a man that turneth from sin, but remember that we are all worthy of punishment."

2 Thess. iii. 6. "Now we command you," *(and the same authority subsists still in the governors of the Church,)* "in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly," &c. Nothing is there which the faithful ought more carefully to avoid, than disorderly livers,—nothing which pastors ought more earnestly to warn their flocks of.

May I ever observe the rules of an holy and charitable severity.

2 Thess. iii. 14. "And if any man obey not our word, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." Excommunication is only for the contumacious,—not to *insult*, but to *cure*.

1 Tim. v. 19. "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." A pastor ought not lightly to be exposed to the revenge of those whom it is probable he has, or shall have, occasion to reprove.

1 Tim. v. 20. "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." That is, who sin grievously and are convinced before two or three witnesses—let such be censured before, or by the consent of, all the congregation.

2 Tim. ii. 25. "In meekness instructing," (reproving) "those that oppose themselves,—if God peradventure will give them repentance," &c. When we consider that repentance is the gift of God,—that the wiles of the devil are many, and corruption of nature very strong, we shall compassionate instead of insulting a sinner. We shall adore the mercy of God towards ourselves, and hope for it for others. We shall fear for ourselves, and pray for them. They may recover, and be saved. We may fall, and be lost for ever.

When men will not take care of their own salvation, the Church owes this care to her children, to hinder them as much as possible from ruining others.

If excommunication is perpetual, it is caused by the obstinacy of the offender, not by the laws of Christ, or His Church, which only deprives wicked men of the benefit of communion for a time, to bring them to a sense of their duty. Church discipline is for the honour of God, for the safety of religion, the good of sinners, and for the public weal—that Christians may not run headlong to ruin without being made sensible of their danger,—that others may see, and fear, and not go on presumptuously in their evil ways,—that the house of God may not become a den of thieves,—and that judgments may not be poured down upon the whole community. Josh. xxii. 20. Did not Achan commit a trespass, and wrath fell on all the congregation?

The most effectual way of answering these ends is, to exercise

a strict impartial discipline. First, to withhold from Christians the benefit of the Holy Sacrament, till they behave themselves so as to be worthy of so great a blessing. And, secondly, if they continue obstinate, (all proper methods being used to reclaim them,) to excommunicate them; and to oblige all sober Christians not to hold familiar conversation with them. But first of all, Christians should be made sensible of what blessings they are deprived, when they are debarred the communion,—even the greatest on earth; without which they can have no hopes of salvation, but must perish eternally, John vi. 53.

He that understands and believes this, will submit to any hardships, rather than incur, rather than continue under, a sentence so full of terror; and a sentence passed by one commissioned by God; and bound, at the peril of his soul, to pass it, it being the greatest indignity to Christ and the divine ordinance, to prostitute the body and blood of Christ to notorious evil livers. God has therefore lodged a power in the pastors of His Church, to repel all such; and it is a mercy even to them to be hindered from increasing their guilt and their damnation.

Nor can any prince, governor, nor human law, hinder a Christian Bishop from exercising this power, because he is under an obligation to the King of kings and Lord of lords to do his duty in this respect.

Nor must it be pretended, that the punishment which Christian Magistrates inflict may supersede this discipline. Those punishments only affect the body, and keep the outward man in order. These are designed to purify the soul, and to save that from destruction. Excommunication, as St. Paul tells us, (1 Cor. v. 5.) is "for the destruction of the flesh, that the soul may be saved;" that is, to mortify the corruption of nature, lust, pride, intemperance, &c.; this being the only way to save the soul of the sinner, and to bring him to reason, that is, to repentance.

For upon a sinner's repentance, (unless where he has incurred the sentence more than once,) the Church is ready to receive him into her bosom, with open arms. But then, by repentance must be understood, *not* a bare change of mind; not an acknowledgment of the sin and scandal; not a serious behaviour for a few days:—all which may soon wear off; but, a course of public penance, a long trial of sincerity, such as may satisfy a man's

self, and all sober Christians, that the sinner is a true penitent: that he has forsaken all his evil ways, evil company, evil habits; that he is grown habitually serious, devout, and religious,—and that by fasting and prayer he has, in some good measure, got the mastery of his corrupt nature, and has begun a repentance not to be repented of.

For want of this care and method, many Christians are ruined eternally. They sin and repent, and sin again, and think all is safe, because they have repented, as they think, and are pardoned.

There are people who are in the same sad case with those that stand excommunicated, though no sentence has passed upon them, namely, such as live in a contempt of the public worship of God. They cannot properly be turned out of the Church, who never come into it, but they keep themselves out of the ark, and consequently must perish.

Excommunication, in the primitive times, was pronounced in the congregation to which the offender belonged. After which, they gave notice to all other Churches; namely, 'let no temple of God be open to him, let none converse with him,' &c.

2 Sam. xii. 13, 14. "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said, The Lord also hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child that is born unto thee shall surely die." The divine justice punisheth every sin, either in this world or in the next. A sinner's willingness to undergo any punishment which shall be appointed by the minister of God, in order to make proof of, and to establish his repentance, is a sure sign that God has not withdrawn His grace, notwithstanding his sin.

(To be continued.)

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

HOLY DAYS OBSERVED IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

The Holy days observed by the Church of England are of two kinds :—Festivals, or days of joy; and Fasts, or days of sorrow.

The Festivals are :—

The Nativity of our Lord, commonly called Christmas-day ; on which we celebrate that great event, the birth, as man, of the everlasting and Almighty Son of God. (Dec. 25.)

The Circumcision of Christ. On this day we are taught to remember with joy the transaction which may be called the first act of our Lord's obedience to the law for our sakes ; the beginning of that unspotted career of purity and duty, which He mercifully submitted to accomplish for the redemption of sinful man. (Jan. 1.)

The Epiphany, the manifestation, or making known of the new-born Saviour to the Gentiles. The first individuals, from the nations who till then had walked in darkness, who bent the knee before Him, were the Wise Men of the East; when led by a miraculous star, they brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh, as their offerings to Bethlehem. And this event we, in an island which has since, by God's mercy, also caught the bright rays of Christian truth, cannot too joyfully or too thankfully commemorate. (Jan. 6.)

The Presentation of Christ in the temple, commonly called, the Purification of St. Mary the Virgin. The event commemorated on this day is the fulfilment of prophecy (Malachi iii. 1.) by our Lord's appearance in the Temple, whither He was brought that His mother might comply with the rite of purification, en-

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joined by Moses. The examples of the holy Simeon and Anna (Luke ii.) are on this occasion held up for our imitation. Like them we should devoutly rejoice that our earthly career has been blessed by the knowledge of CHRIST's coming in the flesh;—that we have been enabled to see that light which was destined to lighten the Gentiles, as well as to be the glory of GOD's people Israel. (Feb. 2.)

THE ANNUNCIATION, or announcement of the approaching birth of the SAVIOUR by the angel Gabriel, to the Virgin Mary, Luke i. 26. (March 25.)

EASTER DAY, and the days following. On this greatest of all festivals, we celebrate the consummation of our LORD's victory over the powers of darkness, His glorious and triumphant rising from the grave; an event in which His true followers rejoice as being alike the great confirmation of their Master's truth, and the earnest and proof of their own blissful resurrection in the fulness of GOD's appointed time.

Easter is kept on different days of the months of March or April, in different years, the time of its celebration depending on that of a full moon, as did the Jewish Passover.

ASCENSION DAY, (forty days after Easter,) on which, as the name of the festival implies, we commemorate the ascension of our LORD into heaven, forty days after His resurrection.

WHITSUNDAY, or the Feast of Pentecost, (ten days after Ascension day). On this day we celebrate the fulfilment of our LORD's parting promise in the descent of the HOLY GHOST, in fire, upon His Apostles, to abide with them, and with His Holy Church, even unto the end of the world.

TRINITY SUNDAY, (the Sunday following Whitsunday). On this day, having commemorated severally the different leading events in our LORD's history, from the annunciation of His birth to the pouring forth of His SPIRIT, we are led by our Church to contemplate the mystery of our Redemption in one general view; glorifying alike GOD the FATHER, who sent His dearly-beloved SON to save us; GOD the SON, who graciously undertook our redemption; and GOD the HOLY GHOST, who mercifully vouchsafes to sanctify us, and all the elect people of GOD.

The Conversion of St. Paul	Jan. 25.
St. Matthias	Feb. 24.
St. Mark	Apr. 25.
St. Philip and St. James	May 1.
St. Barnabas	June 11.
St. John the Baptist	June 24.
St. Peter	June 29.
St. James	July 25.
St. Bartholomew	Aug. 24.
St. Matthew	Sep. 21.
St. Luke	Oct. 18.
St. Simon and St. Jude	Oct. 28.
St. Andrew	Nov. 30.
St. Thomas	Dec. 21.
St. Stephen	Dec. 26.
St. John	Dec. 27.

On these days we are instructed to seek encouragement in our Christian warfare, by remembering the triumphant issue of that warfare in the cases of those eminent followers of their Lord, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Baptist, and the first martyr. In the graces bestowed upon them, we behold the most striking illustrations of God's merciful promises of support to His servants; and in striving to confirm our own faith by the example of theirs, we are following the advice of one of themselves—of one "not a whit behind the chiefest of them,"—St. Paul. See his Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. xi.

The Holy Innocents. On this day we commemorate the infants of Bethlehem, whose blood, shed by Herod, was the first spilt by the enemies of Christianity in opposition to its progress. Mourning this, and all similar events, the Church yet directs our praises to Him, who made infants to glorify Him by their deaths; and who, while receiving to His mercy these and millions of other infant souls, has declared for the instruction of those more advanced in years, that "of such" as little children "is the kingdom of heaven." (Dec. 28.)

St. Michael and all Angels. Sept. 29.

All Saints. Nov. 1.

We should ever recollect that we, humblest members of CHRIST's Church militant [1] here on earth, form part and portion of a great society—of what St. Paul calls "the general assembly and Church of the first-born," Heb. xii. 23. And to this belong alike those glorious spirits who have never known either sin or sorrow, and those glorified saints, who, having come out of the great tribulations of earth, have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. vii. 14. These two days are therefore set apart, that we may comfort ourselves, by thinking on the great privilege to which we are invited, of an union with that blessed society; and that the thought may inspire us with additional ardour to run, while yet on earth, the race that is set before us.

The FASTS of the Church of England are,—

In the first place, the vigils, or days before the following festivals.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD	ST. PETER
THE PURIFICATION	ST. JAMES
THE ANNUNCIATION	ST. BARTHOLOMEW
EASTER DAY	ST. MATTHEW
ASCENSION DAY	ST. SIMON AND ST. JUDE
WHITSUNDAY	ST. ANDREW
ST. MATTHIAS	ST. THOMAS
ST. JOHN BAPTIST	ALL SAINTS.

These the Church has prescribed to be observed as seasons of fasting, that we may bring our minds into a fitter state for celebrating the more joyful solemnities which succeed them. Those festivals which are not preceded by such fasts either follow immediately other festivals, or occur, for the most part, in what the Church considers seasons of joy; as, for instance, the Circumcision, at Christmas time, and St. Mark's day, between Easter and Whitsuntide, while we are commemorating the glorious events which followed the resurrection. With regard to the feasts of Saints and Apostles, the observation of these fasts tends to revive in our minds the recollection of the troubles and sufferings which

[1] That is, "in a state of warfare."

these Christian heroes underwent on their way to the possession of that happiness and glory which we are, on their festivals, invited to contemplate. And upon this principle, probably, it is, that no fast is appointed before the feast of St. Michael and all Angels. We have no previous struggles with sin or evil to commemorate in the history of those exalted beings who have never partaken of mortality or of its troubles; but have, from the beginning, been happy, pure, and holy, in Heaven.

Lent,—Or the season of forty days, excluding Sundays, which precedes Easter. The earlier part of this solemn season is intended to prepare us for the great week of our Lord's passion, with which it concludes. And the space of forty days seems marked out as a proper period for fasting and humiliation by the instances, not only of Moses and Elias, but of One far greater than they, who prepared Himself for the commencement of His ministry by a fast of forty days in the wilderness.

Ash-Wednesday.—The first day of these forty has ever been observed by the Church with peculiar solemnity. On that day. in early times, her ministers maintained the custom, which the Apostles had introduced and enjoined, of putting to open penance and shame notorious offenders against her laws or her authority; thus, according to the direction of Scripture, punishing them in this world, that they might be led to repentance, and that their souls might consequently be saved in the world which is to come.

But those happier, because purer, days of the Church's history have past away. God in His own good time will renew them; and that He will speedily do so, we are bound to pray. In the meanwhile, the Church calls upon us, upon this day, collectively to humble ourselves before Him whom our sins and our abandonment of this godly discipline have deeply offended; and to implore His pardon for those transgressions, committed among us, without meeting such rebuke, for which we affirm with our own mouths, His vengeance and curse to be due. In making this acknowledgment, we continue, in the Christian Church, a ceremony which God Himself ordained for the Jews. See Deut. xxvii. 13—26.

The different days of Passion week : of the week, that is, between the Sunday before Easter and Easter-day—are considered by the Church fasts of such importance as to have Epistles and Gospels appointed to each. The same reasons which should incline us to a reverential observance of Lent in general, apply of course, still more strongly to the week which represents the season of our SAVIOUR's sufferings ; and, most strongly of all, to that solemn day which commemorates His death ; and which, in memory of the benefits which we derive from that mysterious event, we call Good Friday.

That we may, indeed, keep in continual remembrance the exceeding love of our Master and only SAVIOUR, thus dying for us, the Church reckons among her other fasts,—

All FRIDAYS in the year, excepting, of course, Christmas-day, should that festival fall on a Friday.

The following days in the year are called EMBER-DAYS.

The Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after	The first Sunday in Lent. The Feast of Pentecost. Sept. 14. Dec. 13.

These days are ordained to be kept as fasts, because the four Sundays which respectively follow them are the appointed seasons for the ordination by our Bishops of priests and deacons to their sacred offices. St. Paul clearly declares the duty of all Christians to pray for those set in ministerial authority over them. And that fasting was practised by the early Church at the season when such ministers were ordained, we learn from Acts xiii. 3.

The above, with the three days immediately before Ascension-day,—days which, under the name of Rogation days, the Church has from the very earliest times employed in special supplication and prayer,—complete the number of the fasts of our English Calendar.

A holy season which, though it is observed by some branches of the Church as a strict fast, is not comprised among the fasts of the Church of England, is that of ADVENT; the season of preparation for celebrating the festival of the Nativity. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, and continues till Christmas Eve.

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The following Works, all in single *volumes, or pamphlets, and recently published, will be found more or less to uphold or elucidate the general doctrines inculcated in these Tracts :—*

Bp. Taylor on Repentance, by Hale.—*Rivingtons.*
Bp. Taylor's Golden Grove.—*Parker, Oxford.*
Vincentii Lirinensis Commonitorium, *with translation.—Parker, Oxford.*
Pusey on Cathedrals and Clerical Education.—*Roake and Varty*
Hook's University Sermons.—*Talboys, Oxford.*
Pusey on Baptism *(published separately).—Rivingtons.*
Newman's Sermons, 4 vols.—*Rivingtons.*
Newman on Romanism, &c.—*Rivingtons.*
The Christian Year.—*Parker, Oxford.*
Lyra Apostolica.—*Rivingtons.*
Perceval on the Roman Schism.—*Leslie.*
Bishop Jebb's Pastoral Instructions.—*Duncan.*
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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

SERMONS ON SAINTS' DAYS.

(No. 3. ST. MARK'S DAY.)

"*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.*"—Ephes. iv. 14.

The Church, in her Collect for this day, directs us how to pray for stability in sound doctrine, as a sign, and indispensable requisite, of something better than mere childhood in religion. She would not have Christians to content themselves with a consciousness of faith, however devout, or with a feeling of love, however fervent, but she wishes every man to *prove* his faith and love; *i. e.*, to see to it, that he believe the genuine Gospel, and love and adore the true and only Saviour. Daily experience shows that it is very possible for men, and serious men too, forgetting this caution, to think all is right, if only certain pious impressions are produced, sufficient, apparently, to lead the mind upwards, and, at the same time, to enforce the relative duties of life. If that be done, say they, all is done. Why go on to perplex good people with questions of mere doctrinal accuracy? This is a very common way of speaking and thinking just at present: and it finds ready acceptance, especially among the many who dislike trouble. For in Christian doctrine, as in other things, it is some trouble to be accurate. Common, however, and acceptable as the notion is, that the *temper* of faith in the heart is every thing, and the *substance* of faith in the creed comparatively nothing; it is a notion at once proved unscriptural and wrong, were it only by this simple consideration;

that so much care has been taken in Scripture, and by God's Providence guiding His Church in all ages, to guard the doctrines once for all delivered to the Saints, and keep men steady and uniform in them. If this were not a principal object in the eye of Divine Wisdom, is it conceivable that the great Apostle should have introduced it, as he has done when speaking to the Ephesians, as one main result of the coming of the Holy Ghost, the very bond between heaven and earth? It is one of the passages, in which he writes like one soaring majestically upward, flight after flight beyond what he had at first intended:—"Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ;" *i. e.*, according to that portion of special infused grace which God sees needful for our several callings in His Church. "Wherefore he saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." What gifts? Surely, to those who think slightly of Apostolical order in the Church, the answer must appear very surprising. "He gave some, Apostles, and some, Prophets, and some, Evangelists, and some, Pastors and Teachers." I do not of course press this text as proving, by itself, the Apostolical authority of our three orders. But thus much, undoubtedly, it proves, that some kind of order was instituted in the beginning, of so important and beneficial tendency, as to deserve a very high place in the enumeration of those royal gifts, by which the Holy Comforter so inauguration of the Son of God. We may, or we may not, enjoy that order still. We *may* have irrecoverably lost it by God's Providence justly visiting human abuse of it: in which case it might not strike us as a practical topic of inquiry: but to suppose that it still exists, or may be recovered, and yet to speak of it as an idle dream, a worn out theory, or (still worse) a profane superstition—this is not what one should expect from those who reverence the Divine Inspirer of this and similar passages in St. Paul. But to proceed: the Apostle goes on to mention *unity of doctrine*, as one main final cause of the institution of this Apostolical system. The Apostles, Prophets, and the rest, were given to the Church by the Holy Ghost, "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, by cunning craftiness,

according to the wily system of deceit: but speaking the truth in love, may grow up unto Him in all things, which is the Head, even CHRIST:" *i. e.* may daily go on unto perfection in serving and copying our adorable SAVIOUR, and in nearer and nearer communion with Him.

It is clear that if the Apostolical ministry does guard effectually the foundations of our faith, it so far gives room and opportunity for all to go on to perfection. It puts men on a vantage ground, disencumbers them of cares and anxieties about that which is behind, and enables them with undivided energy to press forward to that which is before. As a mere witness, the Apostolical system, supposing it really such, must have this effect: and we must not forget, that, on the same supposition, especial helps from Divine Grace may be looked for as likely to be vouchsafed to those who humbly endeavour to go on by its aid.

Now, that the great Head of the Church has hitherto made use of the succession of Bishops as a singular mean for guarding the doctrine of His Incarnation in particular, was shown on a former occasion, by reference to the ancient Church: where it was proved, that both as indisputable witnesses, and as commissioned and responsible guardians, the Bishops of the three first centuries effectually maintained the truth for us. The same conclusion is now to be deduced from a more painful set of experiments, in which modern times, unfortunately, have too much abounded. We are to consider what has been the doctrinal result in those Churches which have been so bold as to dispense with primitive discipline and government. If we find them marked, in the great majority of cases, by great unsteadiness and vacillation of doctrinal views, even on those points which contain the very essence of our faith: will not this be an additional lesson to us, that by forsaking the Apostolical ministry we are but giving ourselves up to be "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine?"

Now, first, although, as I said before, the heretics of the first ages dared not openly dispense with Apostolical succession, the times, as they well knew, not enduring it: yet they showed in some remarkable instances, how little they really cared for it. The following is the complaint of Tertullian in the second cen-

tury :—" It may be right here to add some account of the practical system of the heretics, how futile it is, how altogether earthly and human; destitute of weight, of authority, of discipline: as well agreeing with their system of doctrine. First, who among them is a Catechumen, who a complete Christian, is a thing uncertain: they come to church: hear the sermon, join in the prayers, indiscriminately: even should heathens chance to come in, they will throw their holy things to the dogs, and their pearls (which, indeed, are but counterfeits) before swine. They hold the overthrow of discipline to be [Christian] simplicity; and our reverence for the same, meretricious art. Every where, and with all kinds of persons, they affect to be on good terms. For it makes no difference to them how they disagree in their own expositions, provided they can but unite for the overthrow of one thing, *viz.* TRUTH. All are puffed up: all profess knowledge. Their Catechumens become complete Christians before they have quite learned their lessons. The very women among the heretics, how forward are they! daring to teach, to dispute, to exercise, to make show of gifts of healing: perhaps, even to baptize. *Their ordinations are off-handed, light, variable;* sometimes mere novices are raised by them to Church office, sometimes men engaged in worldly business, sometimes deserters from our ranks; whom they hope to make sure of by the compliment, having no reality" [of spiritual power] " to offer. In fact, promotion is nowhere so easy as in the camp of rebels; since the very act of being there is rewardable service. Accordingly, one man shall be their Bishop to-day, another to-morrow: to-day a Deacon, to-morrow a reader: to-day a Presbyter, to-morrow a mere layman. *For in laymen also they will vest the powers and functions of the Priesthood.*"

As an instance of what is thus generally stated by Tertullian, take the behaviour of Novatian, Presbyter in the Church of Rome, who, about the year 252, was the founder of a sect which professed especial strictness of moral discipline. The testimony concerning him, of his own Bishop, Cornelius, a prelate of the highest character in the Church, is as follows:—" Never in so short a time was so great a change seen, as we witnessed in Novatian. He was continually pledging himself by certain fearful

oaths, that the Bishoprick was no object to him: and now, on a sudden, as it were by some stage trick, he comes forward in public a Bishop! Reformer as he is of doctrine, and champion of pure Church principles, having entered on a scheme for making himself a Bishop, without Divine sanction, by underhand means, he selects two, as desperate as himself, and sends them into certain small and insignificant dioceses of Italy: where, lighting on three Bishops," (the requisite number for consecration,) "men rustic, and very simple, he persuades them to come with all speed to Rome, as though by their mediation some present dispute in that Church might be composed. Being there come, he surrounds them with men like himself, provided for the purpose; and at a late hour, after a full meal, when they were off their guard, compels them to make him Bishop, by I know not what imaginary and vain ordination."

Is it not plain that this person would have rejected the episcopal succession at once, if he could have compassed his ends without it? So far, therefore, he is an instance of the fact, that disrespect to that succession is a part of the heretical character. And although it is not exactly to the present purpose, I cannot refrain from adding also a circumstance which betrays his mind regarding the sacraments of CHRIST. Having set himself up as a schismatical rival to Cornelius, the true Bishop of Rome, this was his method of securing to himself partisans: in the act of solemnizing the holy Eucharist, "when he had made the offerings, and was distributing to each communicant his portion, and conveying it to him, he compels the unfortunate men, instead of giving thanks, to utter the following oath: he holding both their hands, and not letting them go until they repeated the words of asseveration after him: and these are his very words:—'Swear to me by the body and blood of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, that thou wilt never forsake me, and return to Cornelius.' Nor is the poor man allowed to taste, before he shall have thus pronounced an imprecation on himself. And when he receives that bread, instead of saying, Amen, he is made to say, I will never return to Cornelius."

It is frightful, but surely it is very instructive, to see how one kind of profaneness thus draws on another. Contempt of Apos-

tolical authority was joined, we see, in this case, with contempt of the Sacraments of CHRIST. In the worse case which followed, that of Arius, the same evil temper led, as every one knows, to a direct assault on the holiest truths of Christianity. The immediate occasion of Arius' promulgating his blasphemy, is said to have been his vexation at failing to succeed to the episcopal throne of Alexandria. This exasperated him so, that he laid in wait for an opportunity of disturbing the person preferred to him, Alexander, a man of true primitive energy. And he took occasion from certain expositions of Scripture, in which, as he, Arius, pretended to think, the Bishop had too much magnified the SON of GOD. The first spring, therefore, of his heresy was a rebellious and envious feeling towards his Bishop. And although for the same reason, probably, as Novatian, his followers never renounced the Apostolical succession; their proceedings were marked all along by a thorough disdain of Apostolical privileges. Witness their unscrupulous use of the civil power, or even of the fury of the populace, wherever it suited their purposes to carry an episcopal election, or control a synod, by such means: witness again the license they encouraged of profane and libellous scoffing, both in prose and verse: by which, added to their improper appointments, they gradually depreciated the character of the most sacred office; so that it is quite melancholy to read the accounts given of what Bishops were at Constantinople in 381, as compared with what they had been at Nicæa, about sixty years before. All was no more than might be expected from a party, whose first overt proceedings are thus related by an eye-witness. "They could not endure any longer to remain in submission to the Church; but having builded for themselves dens of thieves, there they hold their meetings continually, by day and by night exercising themselves in calumnies against CHRIST and us. . . . They try to pervert those Scriptures which affirm our LORD's eternal Godhead and unspeakable glory with His FATHER. Thus encouraging the impious opinions of Jews and Heathens concerning CHRIST, they lay themselves out to the uttermost to be praised by them: making the most of those points, which the unbelievers are most apt to ridicule; and daily exciting tumults and factions against us. One of their methods

is, to get up actions at law against us, on the complaint of simple women, disorderly persons, whom they have perverted. Another, to expose the Christian profession to scorn, by permitting the younger persons among them to run irreverently about all the streets:" *i. e.*, as it would seem, from one conventicle to another. . . . "And while they thus set themselves against the Divinity of the SON of GOD, of course they shrink not from uttering unseemly rudeness against us. Nay, they disdain to compare themselves even with any of the ancients, or to be put on a level with those, whom we from children have reverenced as our guides. As to their fellow-servants of this time, in whatever country or Church, they do not consider a single one to have attained any measure of true wisdom: calling themselves the only wise, the only disdainers of worldly wealth, the only discoverers of doctrinal truth; to themselves, they say, alone are revealed things which in their nature never could have come into the mind of any other under the sun."

Such were the original Arians, the first powerful impugners of the Divinity of JESUS CHRIST; such their conduct towards their Bishops, and their reverence for Apostolical authority. The list of examples might be greatly enlarged; but it is time to go on to more modern times, and see what the result has been, where that was done, (I do not say from motives like theirs,) which Novatian and Arius clearly would have done if they had dared.

The largest experiments yet made in the world on the doctrinal result of dispensing with episcopal succession, are the Lutheran Churches of North Germany, the Presbyterian or Reformed Churches of Switzerland, Holland and Scotland, with their offshoots in France, Germany, England and Ireland, and the Congregational or Independent Churches, in this island, and in America. I am not now going to dispute the necessity of what was done at the Reformation, (although it would be wrong to allow such necessity, without proof quite overwhelming,) but simply to state, as matter of fact, what has ensued in each instance, in regard of the great doctrine of our LORD's Incarnation.

First, in *North Germany*, whatever may be supposed the cause, it is notorious that a lamentable falling off from the simplicity of evangelical truth prevailed during a considerable part of the eighteenth century. Views prevailed, which are commonly called Rationalist: *i. e.*, which pretend to give an account, on principles of mere human reason, of Christianity and every thing connected with it. Of course the union of God and man, in the Person of Jesus Christ, was an object of scorn to a nation so led away by "philosophy and vain deceit." But it is a point well worth remarking, that, according to some who know much of German literature, the mischief was occasioned in good measure by the importation of Deistical books and opinions from England[1]: books and opinions which England herself had rejected. Why so great a difference in the reception of the same error by two kindred races of people, lying very much under the same temptations? Is it unreasonable to suppose that the Apostolical succession and safeguards arising out of it, which England enjoys, had something to do with her comparative exemption from that most alarming error?

The next which occurs is the case of the Church of *Geneva:* and it is, indeed, a most startling case. It appearing at the time morally impossible to get a sufficient number of episcopally ordained Pastors, Calvin was induced to neglect the Apostolical Commission in his plan for the reformation of Geneva; or rather to search holy Scripture for a new view of that commission, which might make him quite independent of Bishops. In so doing, he made out for himself the platform of Presbyterian Discipline. Having once established that as of exclusive divine right, he precluded himself from taking advantage of the avenue for returning to the true succession, which was soon after opened to him by his intercourse with the English reformers. It should seem that he could not help feeling how irreconcileable this his new form of Church government was with the general witness of the Fathers: and hence, among other reasons, he contracted a kind of dislike of the ancient Church, and an impatience of being at all controlled by her decisions, which ultimately has proved of the worst

[1] Pusey on the Theology of Germany, part I. p. 124.

consequence to the Genevan Church in particular. For example, he feared not, in his prime work, the Institutes, to speak contemptuously of the Fathers of the Council of Nicæa, and to designate the capital article of their majestic creed as little better than "an affected and childish sing-song." Another time he uttered a wish that the word "TRINITY" might be discontinued in the formularies of the Church. These and other symptoms of a desire to take liberties with antiquity, were not unnoticed by a new sect, just then creeping out of the ground in Italy. Socinus and his partisans, one after another, betook themselves to Geneva, as the soil most congenial to them: and the later years of Calvin, and almost all those of his successor, Beza, were disturbed by that heresy and others akin to it, both at home and among their spiritual colonies abroad: especially those in Poland and Transylvania. It is well known how violently some of these false teachers were attacked by Calvin, even to the death: and his letters altogether betray a soreness and anxiety on the subject, as if he were aware that the system of his Church was incomplete, and did not feel quite sure that it was not his own fault. If such were Calvin's misgivings, the experience of later times has furnished a sad verification of them. After a gradual declension of many years, the Church of Geneva has now, it appears, sunk down to the very lowest standard of doctrine consistent with nominal Christianity. The Trinity, the Atonement, the Incarnation of the SON of GOD, are, or were lately, absolutely proscribed by authority as topics of preaching in the congregations there considered orthodox. Could such a downfall so easily have taken place, had not the authority of the Primitive Church, as a witness and interpreter of holy writ, been intentionally disparaged from the beginning, and private, that is to say, popular and fashionable judgment set up instead, for strictly Presbyterian purposes? Episcopal sway, appealing as it must to antiquity, was surely just the thing needed to watch and check that evil leaven before it had spread so far.

A like effect, proceeding, as it may be thought, very much from the same cause, may be seen in *Holland*, in the rise and growth of that school of divinity, commonly called Liberal or Latitudi-

narian: which began with Episcopius and others in the seventeenth century, and which has greatly tended to encourage a habit of explaining away the mysteries of the faith in almost all Protestant countries. The fact seems to be, that the extremes of the Predestinarian doctrine, violently pressed as they were at the Synod of Dort, produced their natural result, a violent reaction: and the minds of men not being prepossessed with the salutary antidote of reverence for primitive tradition, (which antidote had been systematically withholden, lest Presbyterianism should lose influence through it,) were ready to give up any thing else, when they had once given up the creeds and definitions of their own Churches. When these divines were pressed with the testimonies of the Fathers, the spirit of their answers were such as the following: "Never shall any advice drive me into the fruitless toil of studying the Fathers; which is more like grinding in a prison-house than any thing else. I envy no man the credit he may acquire in such a frivolous, insignificant pursuit. Others, for me, may have all the glory of much reading and great memory, whoever they are, who can find pleasure in wandering and rocking about in that vast ocean of Fathers and Councils." And (let it be well observed) this founder of the liberal school goes on distinctly to avow, that "he takes no great pains," nor ever did, "to acquaint himself with the writings of the Fathers:" whom, indeed, he grudges to call "the Fathers," accounting it a name of too much reverence. On this, our learned Bishop Bull remarks, what is much to our present purpose, as showing how cheap thoughts of the Primitive Church might naturally lead some steps towards heresy. "Much, indeed, were it to be wished that Episcopius had excepted the Fathers and writers of the three first centuries, at least. Had he spent more time on them, it would never have been regretted either by himself or the Church. For it would have saved him from representing the Arian and Socinian doctrines, regarding the Person of our SAVIOUR, as having been, in the judgment of the early Churches, erroneous indeed, but not so bad as heretical [1]."

[1] Bull, Jud. Eccl. Cath. p. 3. ed. Grab.

Passing over to our own island, we are met, at once, by a fact, which appears at first, as far as it goes, to tell against the preceding conclusions. The Church of *Scotland*, ever since the Revolution, has been altogether Presbyterian; and yet, by God's blessing, her Ministers never have been accused of such a defection as took place at Geneva. Allowing the many good parts of her system (which, be it observed, are all in a primitive spirit,) full credit for this, yet one may be permitted to observe, that something naturally must be ascribed to the vicinity of our own Church diffusing a kind of wholesome contagion, the benefit of which has been acknowledged by some of the great lights of the Scottish establishment [1]. And it may be doubted whether many of the laity of that country, and especially whether the leading schools of education, have not been all along gradually verging towards something like Genevan profaneness. A little time will probably show—certainly there are symptoms in Scotland at this moment, which would make an orthodox Englishman more than ever unwilling to part with that outwork of Apostolic Faith, which England, under circumstances in many respects peculiarly untoward, has hitherto found in the Apostolical Commission of her Clergy.

In *England* itself, it is hardly necessary to do more than notice the acknowledged state of the Presbyterian Churches. Not being subjected to the control of so strict a discipline as those of their communion in Scotland, and being moreover thrown into more hostile contact with the principles of ancient episcopal order, they have subsided, one after one another, into a cold and proud Socinianism. Three years ago, it was stated on dissenting authority, that the whole number of Presbyterian chapels in England was 258, out of whom 235 were in reality Unitarian.

Among the Independent or Congregational Churches (in which denomination, when speaking of Church government, the Baptists are of course included) no such *avowed* defection prevails. But their systematical disparagement of the holy Sacraments, their horror (for it is more than disregard) of authority and antiquity,

[1] Dr. Chalmers on Establishments.

and the tendency of their instructions and devotions to make Faith a matter of *feeling* rather than a strict relative duty towards the persons of the HOLY TRINITY: these and other causes are, I suspect, not very gradually preparing the way for lamentable results among them also. And it is most evident that all such causes act more strongly for the want of that check which a controlling Episcopacy supplies; such an Episcopacy, I mean, as may confidently make a continual appeal to the very Apostolical age.

But we are not left quite to conjecture on the doctrinal tendency of Congregational views of Church government. The experiment has been tried on a large scale in America; and in one part of it (New England) with something of that advantage which endowments may be supposed to yield towards stability of Orthodox doctrine. The result may be given in the words of a Socinian writer. "In the United States, where there are no obstructions to the progress of knowledge and truth, the spread of liberal doctrines has exceeded our most sanguine expectations." An account which is confirmed by the testimony of all parties. Now, it is allowed, that in the same United States the Independents and Baptists put together greatly exceed all other denominations of Christians. The only country, therefore, of Christendom where congregational principles of *government* entirely prevail, is likewise the only country which witnesses the rapid and unmitigated growth of Unitarian principles of *doctrine*. In other countries, generally speaking, the "God-denying apostasy" finds more or less acceptance, in proportion as less or more remains of primitive order and respect for the Apostolical commission.

"But," it will be said, "what then becomes of the opposite case of the Church of Rome? She, too, has her grave doctrinal errors, deeply trenching on scriptural truth, awfully dangerous to the souls of men; and yet she is generally considered as the great champion of the Apostolical commission." The answer to this lies in the fact, well known, however little considered, that in the same degree as the Romish Church swerved, *as a church*, from Christian verity, she laboured also to induce her subject Bishops to part with their claim to a succession properly Apostolical.

Many and earnest were the debates on this point, at Trent, in the year 1562: the Papal Legates labouring, on the one hand, to enforce a declaration that Episcopal authority was not of divine right immediately, but mediately through the See of Rome, the Bishops of Spain more especially insisting on the contrary tenet. The matter was quieted by a kind of compromise through the intervention of the French Bishops, and is accordingly left undecided in the decrees of that Council. The debates, however, remain on record, a remarkable proof that the spirit of Popery, as of all Anti-christian corruptions, shrinks back, as it were instinctively, from the presence of Apostolical principles of order.

If any one ask, "Why should all this be so? What has the Episcopal succession to do with *doctrines*, with the doctrine of our LORD's Incarnation more especially?"—the answer has been partly given in the course of this brief sketch, especially in what related to Geneva. But, in general, the following considerations would appear to suffice.

First, As matter of direct *argument*, when once men have learned to think slightly of the testimony borne by the ancients to the primitive discipline, they will naturally lose some part of their respect for the testimony borne by the same ancients to the primitive interpretation of Scripture. Now the questions between us and UNITARIANS are, in a great measure, questions of Scripture interpretation. Is it not clear, then, in how great additional jeopardy we place the irreverent and the wavering, when, from whatever cause, we shake their confidence in the express testimony of the early Fathers?

Secondly, Looking at the whole subject as matter not of argument, but of *feeling* and *temper;* boldness and self-sufficiency in dealing with those who came next to the Apostles, will prepare the mind to lay aside some portion of that deference with which we should approach the holy Apostles themselves. They and their writings will be treated more and more with a sort of hasty familiarity: inspiration will be less and less thought of; and then, should either heresy become fashionable, or the man be

naturally restless in discussion, and tormented with thoughts of his own ingenuity, the result is all but morally certain.

Thirdly: (the point must not be omitted, however the majority may agree to scoff at it, and however gravely some may blame it as uncharitable:) if there be such a thing as a true Apostolical commission, truly connected with the efficacy of CHRIST's holy Sacraments; then we must suppose, that where that commission is wanting, especially if the want be through men's presumption or neglect, then the gracious assistance of the HOLY GHOST cannot be so certainly depended on, as for other sanctifying purposes, so for the guiding of the mind to doctrinal truth. Of course, then, the evil spirit and the tempting sophistry of the world will have the more power over men: so that if for no other reason, yet through the want or imperfection of the ordinary channels of grace, schism might be expected to lead to false doctrine and heresy.

Can it be necessary to add the obvious remark, that if the Church system were needful heretofore, it is but rendered the more evidently necessary for every advance in intellectual light and liberty, which the present age, from day to day, prides itself on making? Alas! if the appetite for knowledge of good and evil be indeed the great snare of all, then all the supernatural means and aids which our LORD has provided in His Church, instead of having gone out of date, are more than ever necessary to us; and those more heavily than ever responsible, who scorn any of those aids, or teach and encourage others to do so.

It is of GOD's great mercy, that to such a perversion of mind is generally annexed what makes its own punishment here, and so far gives it a fairer chance of better and more humble thoughts in time for hereafter. We are plainly taught by St. Paul, that those who permit themselves to disparage the heavenly gifts, conveyed to us by the SPIRIT of CHRIST through His Apostles, may expect to be, if no worse, yet all their lives "children, tossed to and fro, and carried away by every wind of doctrine:" or, as he elsewhere expresses it, "ever learning, and never able to

come to the knowledge of the truth." Let us remember these things, when we hear, as we too often have heard, and must more and more expect to hear, of ingenious men letting go their hold, first, of Christian order, and then of Christian faith; and let us fear and pray both for them and for ourselves.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

ON THE CHURCH AS VIEWED BY FAITH AND BY THE WORLD.

BY A LAYMAN.

Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but ye see Me.
JOHN xiv. 19.

MOSES endured his trials, according to St. Paul in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, "as seeing Him who is invisible." And this blessed privilege it is, according to the Apostle's language throughout the same chapter, which has distinguished the true servants of GOD, in every age, from the unbelieving world around them. Even while pilgrims here on earth, "the pure in heart," in one sense at least, "see GOD." They trace, alike in the events which befal themselves, and in the varying scenes which succeed each other before their eyes on the great theatre of life, a Presence and an Agency of which mankind at large know nothing. Things visible and tangible they feel but to be the screen and vail of the things invisible and intangible behind them; or, at most, to be the adjuncts and comparatively unimportant accompaniments of the great system in which their spirits really move. They view the things of earth as being, as in truth they are, necessarily connected with the things of heaven. They habitually look, not only "through nature, up to nature's GOD," but through the wide expanse of the social and moral world around them,—through the habits, opinions, and institutions, of their time and country—through the strife of politics, and the din of the unruly multitude,—to that eternal BEING who reigns above them all; whose will and whose

counsels are in truth interwoven with them all,—and who works out His own great designs as surely by the operation of these jarring and unruly elements, as by the more tranquil and steady processes of the world of inanimate nature.

And this view of God in all things—this habitual contemplation of the Almighty, His word, and will, in connection, not only with our daily actions, but even with the daily scene before us, it is, of course, the object of the great enemy of the Church to obstruct and to prevent. His most ardent wish is, to thicken the screen before us,—to persuade us to regard the tangible things which surround us as the exclusive objects of our moral vision,—to induce in us a belief that the adjuncts to the great scene really open to our ken, are to be identified with that scene itself. And even with regard to things, which from their nature are the most essentially (so to say) connected with Heaven, he would have us forget the connection, and imagine that the things of earth with which, in this world, they are necessarily involved, are the heavenly things themselves. He would have the objects of our contemplation, and by consequence our spirits themselves, of the earth, earthy; he would darken the prospect before us by excluding, if possible, every gleam of celestial light which might burst through the vail; every ray of spiritual brightness which might impart to us, amid the dimness and the haziness of our nearer prospect, a conception of the glories of a world unseen.

These great truths, for such they are, may be illustrated by examples varied as is the manner of Satan's warfare with the Church in each succeeding generation. But the most profitable illustration of them, as far as this generation is concerned, may be drawn from the mode in which he is especially labouring to deceive ourselves and our contemporaries by obscuring, as far as in him lies, from our view, the real nature of the Holy Church itself, to which we belong. That Church, we may presume, as contemplated by Christ's followers, by the light which His Holy Spirit sheds upon their minds, is seen to be His own Divine Institution; to be an institution gifted and blessed by Himself in the first instance, and still presided over by Ministers deriving their authority from those Apostles on whom He deigned to breathe, and with whom, in their Apostolic capacity, He pledged

Himself to be even unto the end of the world. They recognize in it a kingdom "not made with hands, not of this world," yet sent into this world, an illustrious guest, to bring to this world Salvation. They behold in it the glorious link which connects together, through every age and in every clime, the blessed company of all faithful people, the school in which the multitude whom no man can number, learn the song which they are hereafter, standing on the sea of glass, to sing before the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne on high. They reverence in it,—but on these subjects I dare not further enlarge,—the body of the REDEEMER Himself, and His mystic Bride below.

Such is, we may imagine, some faint outline of the view which would be taken of the Church by its true and approved members. With what reverence, then, must that Church, whether considered collectively, or with reference to any given national branches of it—while, at least, such branches continue in their first faith—be by them regarded! And what a triumph must it be for the dark spirit of evil, when he succeeds in blotting from the mind of a baptized member of that Church every vestige of these exalting themes of contemplation; when he induces one entitled to rejoice in the blessed fellowship of the sons of GOD, to turn his eyes from these glories of his inheritance, and to fix them, exclusively, on the earthly accompaniments by which the Church, while here militant below, maintains her connection with the external world.

But, alas! is he not doing this on every side around us? Is he not daily tempting ourselves to regard the Church, a true branch of the Church Catholic, established in these our islands, as a mere human institution? to consider the revenues with which the piety of holy men of old endowed its Ministers, as a provision set apart by the state for the purposes of education, with a view to the temporal advantages of society? and to imagine that those Ministers themselves are the servants of the government, appointed by its authority, primarily responsible to it for the discharge of their duties, and subject (like civil or military officers appointed by the executive), alike with respect to the extent and to the duration of their powers, to its general superintendence and control.

Such views are, in these days, notoriously too common; and a

clearer instance cannot well be imagined of that system of forgetting things invisible in things visible, which it must be the most strenuous wish of the Power of evil to maintain.

The Church, in itself, is a divine institution; and as a visible community and body in the state, it is also, in one sense, a political institution. The worldly speculator—he who limits his views to the tangible objects of sense,—will, therefore, regard it as a political institution alone. Its Ministers have spiritual powers, those, for instance, of administering the Sacraments; as possessors of property and privileges, they also, in this country, possess temporal powers. The worldly eye will therefore regard their temporal powers alone. As Ministers of CHRIST, they prepare man for a happy immortality in the next world, and in so doing, incidentally make him a better member of society, and improve his condition in this.—The latter effect of their teaching is all which strikes the worldly eye. As dispensers of religious knowledge, they incidentally promote the general education of mankind; and this latter comes to be considered by the world as their principal business. And lastly, while they derive their primary commission from the REDEEMER, and their secondary character—if I may so call it—from the constitution of the country, the eye of the world can see in them but the servants of the latter; forgetful that their true Master, that He to whom alone they are responsible for the discharge of the most important functions entrusted to them,—the functions of their ministerial stewardship,—is the Almighty Head of the Church who ever watches over it in Heaven.

To entertain views like these, thus habitually to forget the connection which in truth exists between the ALMIGHTY and His own Holy Institution, is, in the most emphatic sense, to live without GOD in the world. And the line of conduct to which such views, if consistently acted upon, necessarily lead, cannot be contemplated by the serious mind without feelings of the most awful apprehension. The REDEEMER has told us that He is, in truth, ever about us; that He, even while seated in glory, feels, as though He were Himself the object of them, alike each act of kindness done to, and each injury inflicted upon, the humblest of His disciples. And if this be so, if the interests of individual members of His Church be in His view thus identified

with His own, how intimately must He sympathize with the fortunes of that Church itself, of that Church which He deigned Himself to found, and especially to commend to our reverential care. Surely if we, blind to His gracious presence, presume to insult, despoil, or irreverently treat as a merely human thing His hallowed institution, we shall one day hear the voice once heard by Saul, "Why persecutest thou ME?" GOD grant that we may, like Saul, hear it while time yet lies before us; that we may hear it in the gentle accents of mercy, not in the trumpet-tone of judgment.

Let worldly politicians and legislators, then, do as they list. Let them, if they imagine it will further their ambitious views, fearfully insult the Church established in our Islands. CHRIST's true servants, stedfastly refusing any countenance to their irreverent projects, will protest against them, if in no other way, by the quiet and consistent tenor of their lives. They will show the world by their actions that they behold the REDEEMER, as He has taught them to behold Him, in His Church. And if that Church, having long been an honoured guest in our Islands, is to be cast down from her high estate, and, whether in England or in Ireland, to be trampled under the foot of power, and made to give place to any one of the unauthorized sects which would usurp her place, they will continue to cling in her adversity to her who had been in her prosperity their nursing mother and their guide. Beholding her built upon the rock of apostolical authority, and convinced that she has not forfeited, by apostatizing from the faith, her original commission, they will reverence her Ministers as much when become the objects of the world's contempt, as they had reverenced them when that world bowed before them with pretended homage.

The rulers of that world may suppose that the Church is in their hands; that they may deal with it according to their pleasure; and that its very existence is at their disposal. Thus thought the rulers of a former day, when the REDEEMER had given Himself into their hands, and when their agents exerted a last malice upon His lifeless remains. They knew it not that even then, in that dark hour, a limit was set to their presumption; the word of Heaven had passed, that a bone of Him should

not be broken, and the whole power of Heaven, could it have been necessary, would have interfered to prevent the violation of the decree. And thus, to our comfort let us remember, it must be with CHRIST's body, the Church, even now. A limit has been set to its enemies, which they cannot pass; the utmost extent of their successful malice has been fore-ordained, fore-registered, in Heaven; nor can they, even in its weakest hour, wreak one insult upon its apparently lifeless frame, beyond those of which GOD, in His goodness, sees fit to permit the infliction.

The existence of such a limit it is impossible that they should believe, or even understand. Their views of the Church's fortunes and condition are necessarily as imperfect as their notions of the Church itself. Seeing nothing but its tangible frame, conscious of its political existence alone, they naturally deem that the overthrow of these externals is the essential overthrow of the Church; which will, as they suppose, cease to exist at all when they shall have deprived it of all those symptoms of existence, which their faculties can perceive. They know not—the Church's enemies, till taught by fatal experience, never did know—that all which the utmost exertion of their violence can effect, will be but to bruise its heel. Its true, its inherent vitality, as it is beyond their ken, is also beyond their power; and in that vitality it may, if GOD so please, grow and flourish the most, at the very moment of their fancied triumph in the supposed annihilation of its powers.

Even to the Church's true members, its real glories here on earth are for the most part the objects of Faith. "The kingdom of GOD cometh not with observation;" the workings of GOD's SPIRIT in the assembly of His chosen,—His constantly repeated triumphs in the overthrow of evil, and in the increase of spiritual life among the faithful, are noiseless and unperceived. Churchmen know not, in their generation, what is passing around them, or even in themselves. In silence and in mystery, GOD is working out, now and continually, the accomplishment of those prophecies, the realization of those inspired pictures which describe the earthly glories of the MESSIAH's kingdom. But the full comparison of those prophecies with their fulfilment, of those pictures with the original events from which, by Divine anticipation, they

were drawn, will never perhaps be vouchsafed to mortal eyes. In a future state of being, when the ALMIGHTY's ways shall be all at length made plain, it may be one of the happy employments of the Blessed to contemplate the Church as it was upon earth; to see how fully all that was predicted of it by the voice of Inspiration was, throughout the period of its duration on earth, fulfilled, and how amply GOD redeemed the promises which He had made to His Holy Institution; manifesting in it, from generation to generation, His glory;—not indeed to sinners in the flesh,—but to the countless myriads who surround His throne,—to perfected Saints and unspotted angels,—and, in a word, to all the sinless and glorified Creation.

In that retrospective view it will undoubtedly be seen, that the world, in systematically afflicting the Church, is but doing its appointed part. May the part assigned to ourselves be the happier one of witnesses for GOD's truth, and defenders of His Holy Institution. May we, seeing GOD in all things,—habitually contemplating the ALMIGHTY as now revealed to the eye of faith alike in His Church and in His world,—prepare ourselves, through His Grace, for that fuller and more perfect contemplation of Him, which shall hereafter be the privilege of the redeemed in Heaven.

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The following Works, all in single *volumes, or pamphlets, and recently published, will be found more or less to uphold or elucidate the general doctrines inculcated in these Tracts:*

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Bp. Taylor's Golden Grove.—*Parker, Oxford.*
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Pusey on Cathedrals and Clerical Education.—*Roake & Varty.*
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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

CHURCH AND STATE.

We are very naturally jealous of the attempts that are making to disunite, as it is called, Church and State; which in fact means neither more or less, in the mouths of those who clamour for it, than a general confiscation of Church property, and a repeal of the few remaining laws which make the true Church the Church of England.

This is what Dissenters mean by Disuniting Church and State; and we are all naturally anxious to avert a step at once so unjust towards men and sacrilegious towards God.

Let us not imagine, however, that every one who apparently joins with us in this anxiety must necessarily have the welfare of the Church at heart. Many people seem to join us at this crisis, and protest loudly in favour of the Union of Church and State, who nevertheless mean by this, something very different from what Dissenters mean, and from what we mean when we are opposing Dissenters. The "Union of Church and State," which many persons so call, and are so anxious to preserve, is in some points almost as great an evil, as it is confessedly, in other points, a good: and there are almost as many persons who support it for its bad points, as there are who hate it for its good.

To make this plain, I shall endeavour to explain what it is that the Union of Church and State consists in, as now enforced by the law of the land.

It consists in two things, State Protection and State Interference; the former of which, Dissenters wish to overthrow; and the latter of which, governments, of whatever kind, are very anxious to retain: while Churchmen have hitherto been contented to accept both conjointly, without perhaps very exactly calculating

how little they gain on the one hand, and how much they sacrifice on the other. This subject is indeed one which, from the confidence hitherto placed by us in the integrity of government, has, perhaps, been much less investigated than any other of equal importance. But recent changes in the constitution have now so entirely altered the mutual relations of the Church and the Legislature, that what has in past times been a becoming, though perhaps misplaced, reliance on authority, would at present be a disgraceful negligence about our most sacred interests. In the following pages, then, it will be my object to consider the *gains* and *losses* which we accept jointly, in the Union of Church and State, arranging them under the above-mentioned heads: State Protection and State Interference.

I. The Protection which the Church receives from the State consists principally in four things.

1. In securing to us by Law some small portion of those ample endowments which the piety of our forefathers set apart for the maintenance of true religion in this country. Of these endowments far more than half are at this day in the hands of laymen, who may be of any religion or none, and do not consider themselves obliged to spend one farthing of it in the cause of God. But there is still a certain remnant in the hands of the clergy, who are thereby enabled to spread truth over the land, in the poorest and most remote districts; and to live in decency themselves, without being a burden to the poor people for whose good they are labouring. This remnant then the State has forborne to confiscate, as it has confiscated the rest; and in this consists the first kind of State Protection.

2. It further consists in enabling us to raise a tax on real property for the keeping our parish churches in tolerable and decent repair through the country,—which tax, as estimated by those who put it at the highest, amounts to about as many thousands a year as the other taxes amount to hundred thousands. This is the only existing law by which Englishmen, as such, are called on to assist in the maintenance of the Church of England.

3. It consists, farther, in allowing Thirty Bishops to sit and vote in the House of Lords, to which House all Bishops, and many

other Church Dignitaries belonged, as a matter of right, at the signing of *Magna Charta;* and from which they never can be excluded without violating the very first article of Magna Charta, the basis of English liberty.

4. In the law *De excommunicato capiendo*, by which the State engages, that on receiving due notice of the excommunication of any given person, he shall be arrested, and put in prison until he is absolved.

Such are the four principal heads of State Protection: on reading them over, it will occur to every one, that the first is nothing more than common justice, and no greater favour than every person in the country receives in being protected from thieves; that, as to the second, the most that one can infer from it is, that in the eye of the State the importance of the Church is to the importance of civil government as a thousand to a hundred thousand, or as one to a hundred; that to counterbalance the third, which admits some Bishops to the House of Lords, all clergymen whatever are excluded from the House of Commons; and that the fourth is a bad useless law, which cannot be done away with too soon.

II. Such is State Protection: now, on the other hand, let us consider the existing *set off* against it, which is demanded of us. This is State Interference, which encumbers us in ways too numerous to be catalogued, but is especially grievous in regard to the two following particulars:—1. Church Patronage. 2. Church Discipline.

1. With regard to the first of these, it is obvious that the efficiency of the Church must ever mainly depend on the character of the Bishops and Clergy; and that any laws which facilitate the intrusion of unfit persons into such stations must be in the highest degree prejudicial. The appointment of our Bishops, and of those who are to undertake the cure of souls, is a trust on which so much depends, that it is difficult to be too cautious as to the hands in which it is placed, and as to the checks with which its due execution is guarded. The sole object which should be kept in view is the getting these offices well filled, and the fewer private interests which are allowed to interfere in filling them the better.

Yet what are the Laws which are forced on the acceptance of the Church for regulating this important matter? What is the care that has been taken to vest the appointment in proper hands? with what *checks* is its due execution guarded? what attention has been paid to any one point except the very last that should have been thought of, the private interests of patrons? We shall see.

The appointment of all our Bishops, and, in much the greater number of instances, of those who are to undertake the cure of souls, is vested in the hands of individuals irresponsible and unpledged to any opinions or any conduct; laymen, good or bad, as it may happen, orthodox or heretic, faithful or infidel. The Bishops, every one of them, are, as a matter of fact, appointed by the Prime Minister for the time being, who since the repeal of the Test Act, may be an avowed Socinian, or even Atheist. A very large proportion of other Church benefices, carrying with them cure of souls, are likewise in the hands of the Prime Minister, or of the Lord Chancellor and other Lay Patrons, who, like him, may be of any or no religion. So much for the hands in which these appointments are vested: the checks by which they are guarded must be considered separately in case of Bishopricks and of inferior benefices.

At former periods of our history, even in the most arbitrary and tyrannical times, various precautions were adopted to prevent the intrusion of improper persons into Bishopricks. To exclude the great officers of state from a share in the nomination was indeed impossible—perhaps not desirable—but to prevent their usurping an undue and exclusive influence, their choice was subjected to the approbation of other bodies of men, with different interests, and sufficiently independent to make their approbation more than a form.

The Nomination of the King and his Ministers was to be followed by a real *bonâ fide* election on the part of the Collegiate Body attached to the vacant See. In the Church of Canterbury this body consisted of 140 men, with small incomes, and connected, in many instances, with the peasantry of the country, whose feelings and opinions they seem to have, in a great measure, represented. The courage and resolution with which these men frequently resisted state persecution, will be appreciated on read-

ing Gervase's History of Canterbury, between the years 1160 and 1200. Indeed, it would be no difficult matter to make a catalogue of the atrocities perpetrated at different times on these collegiate bodies by kings and nobles, in the hope of extorting consent to improper nominations; such as would rival Fox's Book of Martyrs in number and cruelty. Here then was the first check on improper appointments.

Again, after Nomination and Election followed Confirmation, a process well calculated to elicit any sinister dealings which might have influenced the previous steps. On a day appointed by the Archbishop, all persons whatever that had any objection to urge against the Election or person elected, were cited to appear in the cathedral church of the vacant Diocese. The Archbishop was himself to be in attendance as judge, to confirm or annul what had passed, according to the evidence which should come before him. The publicity of this process, and the circumstance that it was conducted in a place of all others the most interested in the result, seemed calculated to preclude any very flagrant neglect of duty.

But should no obstacle have interfered with the will of the State, either in Election or Confirmation, it still remained with the Archbishop to decide whether he was justified in consecrating: and in deciding this he was left to the dictates of his own conscience, exposed indeed to the vindictive tyranny of power, but uncontrolled by any law, and responsible to no earthly tribunal.

Thus it appears that in the most arbitrary and tyrannical times the constitution of England recognised three independent checks to the King's appointment, allowing a *veto* to be put upon it either at Election, Confirmation, or Consecration. These checks were, indeed, frequently overpowered by the capricious tyranny of the feudal system, or the still more capricious interference of the Bishop of Rome. Perhaps, also, though upon the whole well adapted to the times in which they were devised, they are unsuited to those in which we live. Yet it is evident, that whatever difference exists between those times and our own, it is a difference in our favour; whatever checks to abuse of power could exist then, might exist and more effectually, now; nor can any objection we may make against the particular checks adopted

under the feudal system, be an argument for abolishing them without finding a substitute.

The object of these remarks is not to raise impatience and complaint, or to suggest changes in present arrangements, which, except under certain contingencies, it might be wrong to contemplate, but merely to set before the Church its *position*. I have shown what it was in the middle ages, in order to assist our minds in the inquiry; let us, with the same object, now advance to the consideration of its present condition.

It cannot be denied that at present it is treated far more arbitrarily, and is more completely at the mercy of the chance government of the day, than ever our forefathers were under the worst tyranny of the worst times. Election, Confirmation, Consecration, instead of being rendered more efficient checks than formerly, are now so arranged as to offer the least possible hindrance to the most exceptionable appointments of a godless ministry. As to Election: the Dean and Chapter, with whom it still formally rests, have only twelve days given them to inquire into the character of the person nominated, who may be an entire stranger to every one of them, or known through report most unfavourably; if they fail to elect in this time, *election* becomes unnecessary, and the Crown *presents* without it. And now the Dean and Chapter have eight days given them, and the Archbishop twenty, for reflection; if within these periods the former fails to go through the form of election, and the latter to consecrate, both parties subject themselves to the pains and penalties of a Præmunire, *i. e.* all their goods, ecclesiastical and personal, are liable to confiscation, and themselves to imprisonment till such time as they submit. Such is the legal urgency which has been substituted for the violence of former times: and thus, as the law now exists, we have actually no check on the appointments of a Socinian (if it so happen) or Infidel Minister, guided by the more violent influences of a legislative body, for which I feel too much respect as a political power, to express an opinion about certain portions of its members.

Again, with regard to the inferior patronage of the Church: a large proportion of our benefices are, as has been already noticed, in the hands of laymen, who may be of any religion under heaven;

and the laws of England (it must be confessed with sorrow) watch so jealously over the interests of these patrons, and so little over those of the Church, that they compel the Bishops, except in cases so outrageous that they can hardly ever occur, to accept at once of the person first *presented* to them, and to commit the cure of souls to him by the process of *institution*. It is worth observing what Judge Blackstone says upon this subject. "Upon the first delay," says he, "or refusal of the Bishop to admit the Clerk, the Patron usually brings his writ of *Quare impedit* against the Bishop for the temporal injury done to his property in disturbing him in his presentation. . . . The writ of *Quare impedit* commands the Bishop to permit the plaintiff to present; and unless he does so, then that he appear in Court to show his reason." What sort of reason the Court will be satisfied with, the Judge informs us in another place. "With regard to faith and morals," says he, "if the Bishop alleges only in generals that he is *schismaticus inveteratus*, or objects a fault that is *malum prohibitum* merely, as haunting taverns, playing at unlawful games, or the like, it is not good cause of refusal." The Judge proceeds, "if the cause be some particular heresy alleged, the fact, if denied, shall be determined by a jury." The sum of the whole is, then, that unless the Bishop can prove to the satisfaction of a jury in a Court of Common Law, that the person *presented* to him for institution has been guilty of some particular immoral act above the grade of *malum prohibitum*, or has maintained some opinion such as shall come under the strict definition of heresy, he loses his cause, and then, if he persist in his refusal, is liable to an action for damages, in which the Judge informs us "the patron may recover ample satisfaction."

Now, if any one were to search among his own acquaintances for those whom he considers least fit for clergymen, he would certainly find that his reason for thinking so was of a kind which he could not make good before a court of justice. Those who wish to see this matter in its true light should read over 1 Tim. iii. to verse 10, and then reflect whether St. Paul would have been very likely to approve of the law of England as it now stands.

These are among the effects of State Interference, as it affects Church Patronage. As to Church Discipline, without entering into the reasons for restoring it, it may be sufficient to

mention one fact, showing the practical effect of the law to suppress it.

Every Churchwarden in every parish in England is called on once a year to attend the visitation of his Archdeacon. At this time oaths are tendered to him respecting his different duties, and among other things he swears, that he will present to the Archdeacon the names of all such inhabitants of his parish as are leading notoriously immoral lives. This oath is regularly taken once a year by every Churchwarden in every parish in England; yet I believe such a thing as any single presentation for notoriously immoral conduct has scarcely been heard of for a century. So that it would certainly seem that, if within this last century any *notoriously* immoral man has been residing in any parish in England, the Churchwardens of that parish have been perjured: and this is the effect of certain laws, which we should call persecuting, did they not exist in our own free country, which interfere with the due discharge of their solemn engagement.

These remarks are offered to my brethren without immediate practical object. Circumstances, however, may occur any day which would make them immediately practical; and it is necessary to be *prepared* for these. Firmly as we may be resolved at present, from the dictates of a sober and contented spirit, not to commence changes; yet when changes are commenced, and seem likely to extend still more widely, it may obviously be the duty of Churchmen, in mere self-defence, to expose and protest against their destitute and oppressed condition.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

SERMONS FOR SAINTS' DAYS AND HOLIDAYS.

(No. 4. ST. PHILIP AND ST. JAMES.)

"*If any man love not the* LORD JESUS CHRIST, *let him be Anathema, Maranatha.*"—1 Cor. xvi. 21.

THE services appointed by the Church for this festival of St. Philip and St. James, turn our attention very particularly to the subject of personal love and devotion to our LORD. St. James was, in some sense, His brother. St. Philip seems, by what is related of him, to have had, in some respects, a more simple and uneducated mind than the other Apostles: and, accordingly, to have sought our SAVIOUR with a faith not unlike that with which a pious untaught countryman may be supposed to seek Him now. Thus, when our SAVIOUR had first called him, and he in his turn would persuade Nathanael to come to Him, and Nathanael made the objection so obvious to a Jew, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip did not pretend at all to argue the matter with him, but simply said, as a plain man might, "Come and see."

And again, it was of St. Philip that our SAVIOUR, with a kind of cheerful condescension, made as if He would ask advice, when He was about to feed the five thousand with a few loaves and fishes, and so to prefigure that Divine Feast, which He meant in due time to ordain for the spiritual food of the whole world. "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" The Apostle answered in a homely, straightforward way, as one having no suspicion that our LORD meant more than He said, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little." It would seem quite in unison with this sort of simple-mindedness, very sincere, but rather unreflecting, that St. Philip should take that part which the Gospel of the day records of him, in the farewell conversation between our LORD and His Apostles. When CHRIST had said, He was the way, the truth and the life: when He had assured them, that if they had known Him, they had known the FATHER; when He pointed out

to them, as the chief fruit of His blessed Gospel made known to the world, that from henceforth they knew the FATHER, and had seen Him: St. Philip put up a request which showed how possible it is, even for a thoroughly sincere person, to be very imperfect in his notions of Christian Truth: to be with CHRIST, and yet not to know Him. He said, "LORD, shew us the FATHER, and it sufficeth us." Bring us at once to the Beatific Vision—bring us into clear and evident communion with Him, whom, as yet, we know only by faith—and that indeed is enough for us. The answer of our Lord is a calm and grave rebuke, intimating, that even at that time, before the HOLY GHOST had come, when the knowledge of the Apostles was necessarily obscure and imperfect, St. Philip's ignorance was hardly such as might be excused. "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father: and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" Even before the Comforter came, the disciples of our LORD were to be blamed for their thoughtlessness, in not being aware of His divine nature and condescension, that He was the brightness of the FATHER's glory, and the express image of His Person, GOD of GOD, made manifest in the flesh. And if then, much more now: much more utterly without excuse are those who refuse to know Him as He is, now that the COMFORTER has been so long time with the Church: that SPIRIT of wisdom, a part of whose especial office was to make Christians rightly receive the three great Evangelical mysteries: the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Communion of Saints: according to the promise of our SAVIOUR, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my FATHER, and ye in Me, and I in you."

I say, the rebuke of our SAVIOUR to St. Philip is a clear sign, that when Scripture speaks so highly of personal love and devotion to our LORD as being "the one thing needful," it means love and devotion to Him, not such as we may rashly imagine Him to be without warrant of His holy Word, as interpreted by His Church, but such as He really is. There could be no question about St. Philip's attachment to Him, and yet we see he incurred rebuke, simply for being so imperfect in his notion of his LORD. How would he have fared if he had been really and positively erroneous? if, while he trusted in the Holy JESUS, he had yet closed with rash speculations concerning Him: had made up his mind to consider Him as no more than a great Prophet,

especially gifted with the inspiration of the HOLY GHOST? Or again, if he had chosen to regard Him as a created—though ever so glorious—angel? Doubtless, in that case, he would have been charged with something worse than mere thoughtless simplicity; his fault would then have been nearer to Pharisaical presumption, intruding men's opinions and fancies into the place of GOD'S Truth. And yet he might have been really attached to our LORD'S Person, and might have depended on Him, and no other, for health and salvation.

Now this point, that CHRIST is to be loved and served, not such as men choose to imagine Him, but such as He really and truly is—this point requires, if I mistake not, to be very seriously recalled to men's remembrance, at the present moment in the Christian Church. For the form which human presumption seems now inclined to take is nearly such as this following: (and, what is very remarkable, it is found among various classes of religionists, who think themselves, and are in many respects, diametrically opposed to each other. But this is, as it were, a point to which, at sundry distances, their errors appear to converge:) namely, That in the matter of acceptance with GOD, sentiment, feeling, assurance, attachment, towards JESUS CHRIST, is all in all: that definite notions of His Person, Nature, and Office, may very well be dispensed with, provided only the heart feel warm towards Him, and inclined to rely upon Him entirely for salvation: that the high mysteries of the orthodox Catholic Faith, the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Communion with our LORD through His Sacraments, are either unnecessary to be distinctly believed, or that such belief will come of itself, if only the above-mentioned feeling of dependence on CHRIST be sincere. Is not this the real tendency of a great deal that is said, thought, and written, at the present moment, in what is called "the religious world?" Is not such the plain *fact*, whether for good or for evil? A few obvious remarks, then, on the tendency and probable result of these things, may, by GOD'S blessing, have their use, coming, as we have seen they do, in strict accord with the Church Services of the day.

Now, it may be at once allowed, that nothing can be said too high, nothing higher than Scripture has a thousand times said, concerning the saving virtue and acceptableness of true love and faith in JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD; and that, consequently, those

who dwell on it exclusively, even in the wrong sense just mentioned, will always, of course, *appear* to have a great deal of Scripture to plead for themselves. But yet the same Scripture, with a very little humble attention, will show where the mistake lies. Take, for example, such a verse as this, the conclusion of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians: "If any man love not the LORD JESUS CHRIST, let him be Anathema, Maranatha:" let him be excluded from the communion of the Faithful, in the most awful form of any, by which the wilful sinner was pronounced accursed, when the LORD comes to judgment. What more easy than for a Commentator, so inclined, to fasten on such a verse as this, and assume that one only thing, by the laws of the Gospel, should exclude a man from Communion, and expose him to the highest of Church censures, viz. want of sincere zeal, want of love to our blessed SAVIOUR? How plausibly might it be contended, that where such zeal and love is, we are not nicely to inquire into a man's creed; that we may kneel by his side, and worship with him, though our notions directly contradict his concerning the nature of the CHRIST, the SAVIOUR whom we worship, if only both agree to own CHRIST as a SAVIOUR. One might go on for ever applying the text, and others like it, in that way; but, as if on purpose to bar for ever all such bold speculations, see how St. Paul has enabled us to check, as it were, this verse, by comparison of others, which show in what sense its terms are really to be understood.

First, as to love of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the same phrase occurs again at the end of another Epistle, in a form of blessing, parallel, as it were, to the curse we are now considering. "Grace be with all those who love our LORD JESUS CHRIST in sincerity." What is the "sincerity," the qualification here introduced? In order to serve the purpose of that system which is now becoming so very prevalent, the word ought to mean, simply, "well-meaning;" "freedom from all guile and hypocrisy;" the same, in short, as "being in earnest." But the true import of the word is, in all probability, something very different from this. It occurs but once in the New Testament, at least at all in a kindred sense: *viz.* in Titus ii. 7. where St. Paul exhorts a newly ordained Bishop, first, "to show forth himself in all things a pattern of good works," and afterwards, "to show forth in doctrine uncorruptness, gravity, *sincerity*, and sound speech, that

cannot be condemned." The sincerity, therefore, or soundness, or enduring purity, of which St. Paul is speaking, would so far appear, in all probability, to be a quality of the doctrine, not of the believer's mind; or rather, perhaps, of both together. "Grace be with all those who love our LORD JESUS CHRIST in *incorruption;* with that sound, enduring love, which, being grounded on the truth of His Nature, will be able to withstand all things, as uncorrupt and glorified bodies will withstand the fires of the last day: grace be with all those who love JESUS CHRIST as they will love Him in Heaven, *i. e.* as truly GOD of GOD, made Man for our salvation."

Next, observe that this anathema is not the only one pronounced by St. Paul in the New Testament. There is one passage more, in which he distinctly threatens the same penalty: and, in all reason, the two must be compared together. Let it be well considered, then, by such as imagine that sincerity of heart is every thing, and doctrine nothing, or very little, what they can make of the awful anathema at the beginning of the Epistle to the Galatians: "Though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

The two verses, compared with each other, lead inevitably to the following result, startling as it may sound to those imbued with the notions of the day; that part of the measure of a Christian teacher's sincerity in the love of JESUS CHRIST, is his agreement in the substance of his doctrine with the system first preached by the Apostles. It is not his amiable meaning towards those around him, no, nor yet what may seem his devout meaning towards GOD, which will shelter him from the Apostolic censure, if he swerve from the platform of Apostolical doctrine. And it is clear that the verse speaks of the whole Creed as a whole, which the Galatians had received of St. Paul. It does not leave them at liberty to choose out which articles they would consider as important according to their notion and experience of practical good, edifying effect, arising out of one more than another. But it supposes them to have received a certain "form of sound words," which no abstract reasoning or theory of their own—nay, more, no miracles or other marks of heavenly authority, would warrant their adding to, or diminishing.

Further, it is plain from the general tenor of the Epistle,

that one particular by which this anathema was at that time incurred by some, was affirming the necessity of the Jewish ceremonial law as part of the conditions of the Christian covenant. Now surely there is not *à priori* any show of abstract impossibility in a person's holding that error, and yet seeming to himself and others to love our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Surely, all that in mistaken kindness is now said by way of extenuating false doctrine with regard to the *Person* of our LORD and SAVIOUR, might have been advanced *à fortiori*, in bar of the anathema against the seducers of the Galatians, whose mistake at first sight only touched His *office*. It might have been said, "What hinders, but these or any men may be full of dutiful regard to our blessed LORD, although they be not fully aware of the repeal of those laws of His, which He promulgated from Mount Sinai to be a ritual for His chosen people: and although in consequence they are still for enforcing those laws on Gentile Christians as necessary to salvation?" We see at once by St. Paul's peremptory sentence, how fallacious all such pleading would have been: how impossible to be tolerated within the true Church, and how dangerous to the souls of those who persisted in it after such authoritative warning. We see that the Preachers of Circumcision in those times, although they might feel, and in many respects act, as if they loved our LORD JESUS CHRIST, were not to be accounted as "loving Him in sincerity" and uncorruptness. We see that sincerity, enduring purity of doctrine in certain great points, is a necessary test of that love for CHRIST which is required to secure human error from the anathema of the Church; a necessary qualification for receiving an Apostolical blessing.

This view receives no slight illustration from certain cases in the history of heresy; cases in which the false doctrine has recommended itself in the first instance to unguarded minds by the show of extraordinary love and respect for our Divine Master, and has ended in direct treason and blasphemy against Him. A very remarkable one occurred in Asia Minor, in the earlier half of the third century. St. Paul himself had expressly warned the Pastors of that division of Christendom, that they might expect men to arise of their ownselves, who should speak perverse things to draw away disciples after them. This had begun to be accomplished in former generations by the swarming

of Gnosticks and Ebionites in those quarters: heresies which appear at first glance shocking to all lovers of CHRIST. But at the time now referred to, a more plausible misinterpretation arose; more plausible as a show of reverence to our SAVIOUR's Person: the author of which was one Noetus, either of Smyrna or of Ephesus. We are told of him by St. Hippolytus, a writer almost contemporary with him, that "he was mightily lifted up by his vanity, and seduced by a fancy prompted by an alien spirit, affirmed that the CHRIST Himself, was 'personally' the FATHER, and that the FATHER Himself was born, and suffered, and died. These things came to the knowledge of the holy Presbyters of that time; by whom he was summoned and interrogated before the Church. At first he disavowed his holding any such opinions: but afterwards he found some to lurk amongst, and having provided himself with associates in error, he tried to make his theory permanent, now reduced into a distinct form. Upon which the holy Presbyters again summoned and called him to account. But he withstood them, using these words: '*What evil then am I doing in that I give glory to* CHRIST? What harm have I done? I glorify one GOD; I know one GOD, and no other beside Him; and that He was begotten and born into the world; that He suffered and died for us.'" Could any thing be more plausible, according to the notion that all is safe if only men are brought to put their trust in our SAVIOUR's Person alone? Might it not as truly then have been urged, as any one now can urge it, that the distinction of Persons in the glorious Godhead is merely a mode of speech, a scholastic theory, and that all was right if men could agree to worship our SAVIOUR? The elders, however, of happy memory, before whom Noetus was answering, were aware of no such defence. According to the simplicity of the Gospel which they had learned, probably with allusion to the very words of their creed, they reply,—"We also have one only GOD, whom we know and acknowledge in truth; we *know* CHRIST; we know the SON, and acknowledge Him to have suffered as in truth He did suffer; to have died as in truth He did die; who rose again the third day, and is on the right hand of the FATHER, and is coming to judge quick and dead: AND WE AFFIRM THOSE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT." "Then having convicted him, they cast him out of the Church."

It really should seem as if, by especial Providence, this frag-

ment of early Church History had been preserved, in order to show Christians how to deal with those heretics, who make their appeal with perverse ingenuity to the good feelings of believers at the expense of their orthodox conviction. If there come any man to you talking affectionately of JESUS CHRIST as our Redeemer, but scornfully of the need of acknowledging Him as Very GOD OF Very GOD: if the words which have been put into our mouths by the Holy Fathers, Creeds, and Councils, are treated as the mere inventions of Platonists or Schoolmen: we have a clear precedent for the kind of answer we should give: we have no need to canvass objections, or to draw subtle distinctions, we have only to repeat our Creed with those blessed elders, and say, "The things which we have learned, those we affirm." If they say, "What harm do we, giving CHRIST all the glory?" we will tell them, "CHRIST has taught His Church by His Scriptures in what way He will be glorified; and it is not for us to tolerate other ways, however they may challenge our admiration for their ingenuity, or our kindness by the seeming sincerity of their inventors."

But such a course is too harsh; too peremptory in its censure of persons, to whom we dare not deny a certain share of well-meaning. This is a natural feeling, as it is natural to shrink, in all cases, from inflicting pain. But if experience show that no apparent piety to our SAVIOUR will secure persons from the deadliest errors, if they allow themselves to take liberties with the old standard of the Faith,—what shall we say? will it not then appear, that the better we think of the motives of our erring brethren, the greater their apparent devoutness and sincerity, the more anxious must we be to speak out, and pull them back, if possible, as brands out of the burning? Now, then, what says experience? Take one instance out of a thousand: one of the most important that could have been mentioned; an instance unquestionably and directly relevant, and probably most fatal in its effects on the Church.

Of all the heresies of the Lower Empire, there is none which, at first, appears more venial, more on the side of loyal Christian love, than that of the Monophysites, at least after they had renounced the error of their first founder, Eutyches, touching the reality of our LORD's crucified body. It would seem as if nothing but excessive reverence towards the glorified Son of Man, would lead men to deny the continuance of His human

Nature: as though of the two, very God and very Man, the weaker were now, as it were, lost and absorbed for ever in the more glorious. In such a sect, therefore of all others, one would expect the most entire alienation from those who deny Christ's Godhead altogether. But what is the fact? When, about the year 640, the Saracens first invaded Egypt, this very party, the Monophysites, were the most numerous in that country, their priesthood being especially strong. Most unfortunately, a violent political as well as religious feud prevailed between them and the orthodox, or Greek party, commonly called Melchites, or Royalists, from their loyalty to the Constantinopolitan emperor,—so that not even intermarriages were allowed. For various reasons they considered themselves greatly oppressed: but, after all allowance made for considerations of that kind, it must be owned a lamentable indication of the tendency of their doctrine, that they actually received the Mussulmans with open arms. Their Patriarch of Alexandria, a man whose name long stood very high among them for sanctity, came to a regular treaty with the Caliph's lieutenant; in which it appears to have been stipulated that he, the Patriarch, should be restored to the episcopal throne of Alexandria, the whole sect for their part co-operating with the infidel invaders. An account has been preserved of the interchange of compliments between the Saracen leader and the Patriarch, on the return of the latter to the city, from which he had been long exiled. Amrou received him with the remark, that in all the countries which the Caliph had conquered, he had not met with any person of presence more august, and more worthy of a man of God. And he actually intreated, and, as it seems, obtained, his prayers for victory and safety in an expedition which he was just undertaking into West Africa and Pentapolis. The prayers of a Christian Archbishop, presiding over the sect which had separated from the Church on pretence of extraordinary reverence for Christ's Person, were asked, and granted, in behalf of the Mahometan Antichrist, just then on the point of wasting provinces which had been, from the beginning, the pride and glory of the Christian world.

There is, then, nothing extravagant in the supposition that heresy, even in its most attractive form of unusual loyalty to Christ, and jealousy of His honour, may prove but a step towards some God-denying apostacy. Whether or no any move-

ment of the kind be at the moment perceptible among us, it surely will be well to bear such examples in memory. It is well that those who, from amiable confidence in the right feeling of themselves and others towards Him who is our common hope, are apt to make light of differences in doctrine concerning Him: it is well, I say, that they should be aware to what point, before now, men have been led by such presumptuous differences. May we not imagine, even at that time, the scruples of some more considerate Copt overcome by such arguments as are now not rarely alleged, when any Churchman is seen to shrink from symbolizing with the corrupters of the Faith, and despisers of the Church? May we not, without any violent improbability, represent to ourselves the venerable patriarch Benjamin reasoning as follows with such an unwilling disciple? "Why should you be so very loth to act with these our Arabian brethren, whom you cannot deny to be our political deliverers? True, they deny that our SAVIOUR is the SON OF GOD; they do not even allow Him to be the greatest of Prophets; but remember what Holy Scripture says; 'Grace be with all those who love our LORD JESUS CHRIST:' and surely it is possible for a Mussulman to love JESUS of Nazareth: nay, he cannot help doing so, if he be at all consistent: he must love one whom his own Scriptures acknowledge as one of the greatest and most beneficent of heavenly messengers. Be of good cheer then: we and these our new allies are in reality much more unanimous than we have been used to imagine, in what we fundamentally believe. In religion, properly so called, we do not really differ from them. We all acknowledge with one voice the great facts of the Bible. They add, indeed, those of the Koran: but that is not of so much consequence, it being still possible for us all, in one sense or other, to love JESUS CHRIST. Let us, then, leave off contending about scholastic subtilties, and let us rather unite all our energies against the one common enemy, the exclusive system of the old Church, that Church which so unphilosophically insists on our adoring the same LORD, confessing the same Faith, and holding by the same Baptism. In this way, we shall be left most sure to make our own high doctrines concerning our LORD and his sole uncompounded Nature thoroughly known to our people: and we shall do incalculably more good than we need fear doing harm by this our partial and apparent compromise with what

may be erroneous in Mahometanism." If reasoning like this ought to have availed in reconciling sincere Eutychians to the Mussulman connexion, then, and not else, it seems intelligible how those who profess to advocate a peculiarly pure and spiritual view of Christianity, should readily unite with the deniers of the LORD that bought them; and, in other respects, more or less directly compromise the system of orthodox belief, where they think there is, humanly speaking, a fair chance of doing more good in the end.

On the whole, there is evidently no security, no rest for the sole of one's foot, except in the form of sound words; the one definite system of doctrine, sanctioned by the one Apostolical and primitive Church. People say, it is hard to bring men to agreement in this: but so is perfection hard in every part of duty. And besides, let the question be asked in all seriousness, is it not much harder to ascertain their agreement in right feeling towards our SAVIOUR? If the illustration were not too familiar, one might say, it is like trying the temperature of a room; one man feels hot, and another cold; but those who would be precise and accurate rather settle the point by a thermometer. In truth, it should seem perfectly impossible to know whether two men exactly concur in feeling: the most that can be positively known is, that they agree in the same form of words to express their feeling. And why, then, should it be counted wrong or absurd for them to accept at the hands of GOD's Church the same form of words wherein to own her system of doctrine, which is one and the same definite thing, and quite independent, surely, of the individual receiving it?

Again: it may be said that so strict a demand of orthodoxy is scarcely consistent with the encouragement given in Scripture to the more implicit faith of persons probably quite ignorant of doctrinal statements: such, for example, as the woman with an issue of blood, who, when she touched the hem of our LORD's garment, was so far ignorant of His true Omniscient Nature, that she thought of being healed without His knowing any thing of it. May it not, however, be reasonably said, that her pious and affectionate faith was, in fact, the very type of that which saves men in the devout use of the means of grace which CHRIST bestows on us? According to her knowledge, so she received Him: and must we not receive Him in like manner according to

our knowledge, as God manifest in the flesh? She came near and touched the hem of His garment, although she could not have explained how the touch should do her any good: and must we not in like manner approach Him in the devout use of His Sacraments, however impossible it must always be for us to understand how they should be means of grace? She indeed was ignorant of some things: but involuntary ignorance is one thing, profane contradiction, or conceited scepticism, another. She had, perhaps, what some might account low superstitious notions of the way to profit by our Saviour: and on the other hand, if they who so judge had stood by and seen St. Peter, when, in anger at the very thought of the crucifixion, he took our Lord and began to rebuke Him, and said, This shall not be unto thee; and we may suppose they would have said, He may be mistaken, but any how his fault is on the right side: he cannot endure any low notion of his Saviour; depend upon it, he is the last to deny Him. We know how that proved on experiment; and perhaps, comparing the two together, we shall not be wrong if we conclude that the only safe way is to take God's will exactly as we find it declared in His word as interpreted by His Church, and not to perplex ourselves with fancies, philosophical or other. So may we hope by God's grace to obtain larger and completer views of our whole condition and duty, and build higher and higher as feeling that our foundation is sure. So may we hope to escape that curse, the terrible accompaniment generally of the Church's anathema, of continuing for ever wavering and unsteady in all the great rules and principles: "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Oxford,
The Feast of the Annunciation.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH A WITNESS AGAINST ILLIBERALITY.

Illiberality of mind in religious matters, bigotry, intolerance, and the like, is the disposition to make unimportant points important, to make them terms of communion, watchwords of parties, and so on.

Now the Church Catholic acts on the principle of insisting on no points but such as are of importance, of judging of opinions variously according to their respective importance, of acknowledging no parties, and of protesting and witnessing against all party spirit and party dogmas.

One remarkable instance of this is to be found in the circumstance, true as a general rule, and capable of explanation in its apparent exceptions, that it knows no master but Christ, as He enjoined. It struck the attention of Christians as early as the age of Athanasius, what is witnessed at this day, that heresies bear the name of individual teachers, whereas the Catholic Faith has no especial human interpreter, but is transmitted on from Christ through His Apostles, in every place. Considering how the names of the champions of all opinions are circulated to and fro by all parties, it is a very surprising fact, that those only remain at this day inseparably connected with the respective doctrines of those who bore them, which belonged to heretics: *e. g.* in spite of all the efforts that have been made, to call the orthodox faith *Athanasian*, that word occurs, for the most part, only in a transitory page of history, being exchanged for *Catholic* by the upholders of the faith, *Trinitarian* even by its enemies, who, meanwhile, cannot help connecting themselves as *Arians*, *Sabellians*, *Nestorians*, &c. with human masters. In like man-

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ner, modern history opens upon us *Lutherans*, *Calvinists*, *Brownists*, *Wesleyans*, &c., but would be perplexed what title to give to the English Church less respectful than *Episcopalian*. We have plainly no human master, such as Melancthon, Bucer, or Cranmer, whatever influence these celebrated individuals might have in their day. We are a branch of the Church Catholic. Not that the absence of such human title is a criterion of Gospel truth; for there were Gnostics of old, and Independents and Quakers now; but that the Catholic doctrine is *ever* free from this badge of intolerable bondage.

This is shown in the case of the parties within the Church, as well as of the heresies and sects external to it; *e. g.* the Augustinians, the Jansenists, or the Arminians among ourselves; or in the various monastic orders, as Benedictine, Dominican, and the like. I mean, the tolerance and comprehensiveness of the Church is shown from the fact, that she *can* afford to receive within her pale varieties of opinion, imposing on its members, not agreement in minor matters, but a charitable forbearance and mutual sympathy. Hence she has been accustomed to distinguish between Catholic Verities and Theological Opinions, the essentials and non-essentials of Christian Faith.

In doing this, she has been guided by the text, spoken against the Pharisees, "Judge not, that ye be not judged;" and while enforcing this command, she both exemplifies obedience to it in her own case, and also becomes herself a test, applied to the hearts of men, to ascertain whether they are bigotted and narrow-minded or not. Contrast the text just quoted with 2 John 10, 11, "If any man come unto you, and bring not this doctrine," &c. and you see at once her gentleness and her severity.

Herein lies one eminent argument in favour of the divine origin of the Church, that, by the course it has actually taken, it gives us a clue to reconcile "not judging," with "not bidding God-speed."

Again, the claim of authority with which it silences quarrels, affords, I say, a *test*, such as we antecedently might expect would be given us, for *ascertaining* that latent Pharisaical temper of party which our Lord rebukes.

Submission to Church authority is the test whether or not we prefer unity, and the edification of CHRIST's body, to private fancies.

Thus, *e. g.* when the man of strong feelings, in old time, merely founded a college or monastery for devotion and study, he *satisfied* the test. When, in modern times, he opens a conventicle, and forms a sect, he is *condemned* by it, as Pharisaical.

When the Baptists go so far as to separate, *because* they think children ought not to be baptized, they fail under the application of it, since the Church, though earnestly enjoining infant baptism, does not exclude from communion those who scruple at it; therefore the Baptists are self-banished. When the Non-conformists separated on account of the surplice, the cross in baptism, &c. they too were detected and convicted of a rebellious spirit, by the same test.

The spirit of Schism, in addition to its other inherent characters of sin, implies the desire of establishing minor points as Catholic or essential points, or the spirit of *exclusiveness.*

The desire of novelty is *restlessness;* the maintenance of *our own* novelty is *selfishness.*

Zeal is the effort to maintain *all* the Truth; *party spirit* is a perverse maintenance of this or that tenet, even though true, yet to the suppression and exclusion of every thing else. "Forte hinc appellata Catholica," says Augustine, "quod totum veraciter teneat, cujus veritatis nonnullæ particulæ etiam in diversis inveniuntur hæresibus."

While Dissenters are exclusive on the one hand, Papists are so on the other. The Council of Trent converted certain theological opinions into (what they maintained to be) Catholic Verities. This was wrong, whoever did it; but it is some comfort to find, that the body that thus became uncatholic, was not the Church Catholic itself. It had been wretched, indeed, had the Church, in its Œcumenic or Universal capacity, surrendered its own essential character, and added to the Catholic faith private judgments. But the Tridentine Council was a meeting of but a part of Christendom. Though the Latin communion is given at 80,000,000 souls, yet the Greek Churches are said to

comprehend as many as 50,000,000, and these were not there represented. Where, too, were the Bishops of the Reformed Churches? Catholic doctrines are those to which the *whole* Catholic Church bears witness: the Council of Trent was collected only from parts of the Church, such parts as differed from the views ultimately adopted there being excluded; and, therefore, representing but a part, not the whole of the Universal Church, it assumed a privilege not belonging to it, for none but the Catholic Church can attest Catholic Truths. As to our Thirty-nine Articles, they were never imposed as essential, only as a basis of union in a particular Church.

It may be added, that, while the Catholic Church is a stay to the inquiring Christian, she is a check upon the forward. She *recommends* much to us, which she does not *impose*, like a true loving mother, "giving her judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the LORD to be faithful." All that is necessary for enjoying the privileges committed to her, is belief in the Apostles' Creed, and that teachable spirit that does not introduce novelties upon it; but in her Articles and Liturgy she aims at directing into the truth, in all its parts, such as wish "to follow on to know the Lord."

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

BISHOP WILSON'S MEDITATIONS ON HIS SACRED OFFICE.

No. V.—THURSDAY.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

(*Continued.*)

Heb. xiii. 4. "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." You dare not say that this is not true. What can you say to your own mind to make it easy? Nothing but this *can* make you easy:—to take shame to yourself, to confess your sins, to fast, and to pray earnestly to God for pardon, &c., and to let others know "what an evil thing and bitter it is to forsake the Lord."

This visitation will either do you much good or much hurt; you will from this time grow much better or much worse.—Since you did not blush to sin, do not blush to own your faults. Let it be matter of joy and thankfulness to you, that we are concerned for you so much. Grace indeed we cannot give;—that is the gift of God;—we can only pray for you, and do our duty in admonishing you, &c.—If you submit for fear only, and not for conscience sake, you will suffer both here and hereafter.

When men, and especially men in any authority, are not content to neglect their own salvation, but are industrious to ruin others, they may depend upon it, they are very near filling up the measure of their iniquities, and consequently their destruction is not far off.

Our charity to offenders ought to be like that of God, not in flattering them by a cruel indulgence, but in putting them, by a merciful severity, in the way of obtaining pardon.

In the primitive Church, no great offenders were restored to communion till they had, by their behaviour, given all possible demonstrations of the sincerity of their "repentance, not to be repented of;" and this, by a long trial of mortification, &c.; for a short repentance too seldom ends in amendment of life; and he who fancies that his mind may effectually be changed in a short time, will deceive himself and the Church, unless he shows this change by fasting, almsdeeds, retirement, &c., and that for a considerable time.

Will any man say that he loves Christ and his Church, when he opposes the authority of her pastors; when he opposes her discipline; or when he weakens her unity?

When we consider, that God is absolute master of men's hearts, we should not think any man incapable of salvation.

My God! let me always fear for myself, when I am labouring to promote the salvation of others.

Remissness in Church discipline is owing, sometimes to indulgence and an easy temper, not caring to trouble others, or to be troubled; sometimes by being satisfied to go on in the track trodden by their predecessors, not considering what duty obliges them to, but what was done before. Others, out of downright neglect, not caring how things go, give opportunity to the enemy to sow tares while they are thus asleep. Thus corruption gets head, and is like to do so, until God awakens the Governors, both in Church and State, and makes them see, that they are answerable for all the sins occasioned by their negligence; and that they have more souls besides their own, to account for; which is one day to fall heavy upon them. Lord, awaken all that are in power, and me, thy unworthy servant, that we may all discharge our duty more faithfully.

There may be people bold enough to make a mock of sin, to submit to public penance with contempt of the authority that enjoins it, and not to be bettered by such Christian methods for the restoring sinners to the peace of God; but it is to be hoped all are not so hardened, and that Christian discipline is, notwithstanding, a mighty check upon sin, and keeps many under a fear of committing such crimes as must oblige them to take shame to themselves before the face of men.

Convocation, 1536.—"That perfect penance which CHRIST requireth consists of contrition, confession, and amendment of former life, and an obedient reconciliation to the laws and will of GOD."—See also the *Homilies*.

Absolution.

Our Church ascribeth not the power of remission of sins to any but to GOD only. She holds that faith and repentance are the necessary conditions of receiving this blessing. And she asserts what is most true, that CHRIST's ministers have a special commission, which other believers have not, authoritatively to declare this absolution for the comfort of true penitents; and which absolution, if duly dispensed, will have a real effect from the promise of CHRIST. (John xx. 23.)—*Pull. Moderat.*

Authority of the Church is only *spiritual* and *ministerial* (the Head and authority being in heaven). She does not, therefore, call her orders *Laws*, but *Rules*, *Canons*; and her inflictions, not *punishments*, but *censures*. She acknowledges that whatever power she has besides spiritual, is either from the favour or injunction of princes.

But (Article 37.) we give not our princes (and they have always disclaimed it) the power of administering GOD's Word, or the Sacraments. And although our spiritual power be from GOD, yet is this power subject to be inhibited, limited, regulated, in the *outward exercises*, by the laws and customs of the land. By this moderation both powers are preserved entire and distinct. We neither claim a power of jurisdiction over the prince, nor pretend to be exempt from his.

Antenuptial Fornication.

Those who enter into marriage only to conceal their shame, ought to give public satisfaction, as well as expiate their sin, by open penance.

The greatest care ought to be taken concerning the sincerity of penitents; till that be done, penance will only be a form, without a power or any real benefit.

In the primitive Church, every thing was done with advice, because their great aim was to have reason and the will of GOD

prevail. A despotic power was forbid by CHRIST himself: "It shall not be so among you." He that is humble and charitable will take the mildest and surest way, and will not be troubled, provided the end be obtained.

Penance.

Sin is the disease of the soul. Diseases are not to be cured in a moment: it will take time to root out their causes, and to prevent their effects; so will it require time to prove the sincerity of our resolutions. We solemnly profess that we repent, and we are not sure but that we lie to GOD.

Discipline.

As discipline slackened, men's manners grew more and more corrupt, even in the primitive times. There were never more infidels converted (saith Fleury) than when catechumens were most strictly examined, and baptized Christians put to open penance for their sins. They that are for making still more concessions to human frailty, will at last set aside the Christian religion, which is established upon maxims of eternal truth, and not on human policy; and instead of gaining or securing the bad, they will lose the better sort. A flattering physician is for giving palliating medicines, to ease the pain, without taking away the cause, which will occasion relapses, until at last they destroy the patient. But a good man will prescribe what he believes necessary to remove the cause, though uneasy to his patient, and will have nothing to do with such as will not submit to the necessary methods of cure.

Penances, in the primitive Church, were never granted but unto such as desired them, and such as desired to be converted. None were forced, but such as would not submit were excommunicated.

Discipline impracticable.

This cannot be, when it *was* practised for so many years in the primitive Church. And what if it be one of those things which CHRIST has commanded His followers to observe so strictly, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; and which He had learned of the FATHER, John xv. 15. and xvi. 13. The commands of CHRIST cannot be

impracticable. That would be to tax Him with ignorance or weakness. When He promised to be with His Church to the end of the world, He engaged to give such graces as were necessary to raise us above our natural weaknesses.

Penances forced are seldom lasting.

The Priest, under the Law, could not accept the offering of a leper, nor allow him to partake of the sacrifice, till he had received convincing tokens of his cleanness; no more ought the Christian Priest to treat sinners as cured, till he sees the proof. *Quesn.*

Matt. xvi. 19. "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Those ministers that know not what it is to bind and loose sinners, reject one half of their commission.

Excommunication is the last remedy reserved for the incorrigible in the case of enormous sins. They who despise it, know not what it is to be an heathen in God's sight,—to be without God for a Father, Christ for a Saviour, the Church for a Mother, and Christians for brethren.

A true penitent is always willing to bear the shame and confusion of his sin and folly before men, that he may escape the anger of God.

Heb. xii. 15. "Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright;" that is, such as for a short pleasure forfeit their eternal inheritance.

Happy that sinner, whom God does not abandon to the hardness of his heart, but awakens him by his judgments, or the visitations of his grace.

Luke viii. 28. "I beseech thee torment me not." These were the words of the Devil to our Lord, and these are the suggestions in the hearts of all sinners, wherever he has got possession. When a minister of Christ, by his sermons, rebukes, &c. or the Church, by her disciplines, attempts to disturb the sinner,

they are looked upon as his mortal enemy; and they treat both the Church and her Ministers worse than this legion did JESUS CHRIST. They despise their power, set at nought their persons, and threaten and persecute them for their good will. *Vide Quesn.*

There is not any greater or more dreadful sign of the wrath of GOD, than when he abandons a sinner to his lusts, and permits him to find means of satisfying them.

The public good is the sole end of Church discipline. The interest of the governors of the Church is no way concerned in it; but only the advantage of their flock, that sinners may be converted; that contagion may be hindered from spreading; that every one may be kept to his duty, and in obedience to the laws of GOD; that judgments may be averted from the public, and that GOD in all things may be glorified; that differences among neighbours may be made up, and charity improved, &c.

Discipline (saith our Homily of the right use of the Church, Part II.) in the primitive Church was practised, not only upon mean persons, but upon the rich, the noble, and the mighty; and such as St. Paul saith, *were even given to Satan for a time.*

Those that make a *mock*, a *sport*, a *jest* of sin, too plainly betray a love of wickedness in themselves.

Exemption.

A legal exemption cannot free a man from guilt, beyond the extent of that power which grants the exemption. If it be a human power, it can extend no farther than to exempt a man from human penalties, not from those that are purely spiritual.

Eccles. viii. 5. "Reproach not a man that turneth from sin."

They whom fear renders cowardly in the exercise of their ministry, forget that they act in the name and place of CHRIST, and are to account to him for the mischief the Church receives thereby.

Deut. i. 17. "Ye shall not be afraid of the face of men, for the judgment is GOD's."

O righteous Judge of the world, give me and my substitutes grace, patiently to hear, and impartially to weigh, every cause that shall come before us in judgment.

Give us a spirit to discern, and courage to execute, true judgment, that all our sentences may be approved by thee, our LORD and Judge. *Amen.*

Deut. xxiv. 17. "Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless."

Isaiah i. 23. "Every one loveth gifts: they judge not the fatherless;" that is, they are poor, and cannot bribe them.

Exod. xxiii. 2, 3. "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause, to decline after many, to wrest judgment: neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause."

Deut. xix. 15. "Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour."

The judgment of the multitude is no rule of justice. "Then cried they all, Not this man, but Barabbas."

John xix. 12. "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend;—when Pilate heard that saying," then he resolved to sacrifice his conscience, rather than lose his prince's favour.

2 Chron. xix. 6. "And he said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the LORD, who is with you in the judgment."

Prov. xvii. 13. "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination unto the LORD."

John xix. 11. "Except it were given thee from above." Although the magistrate's authority is from GOD, yet he is answerable to GOD for the due execution of it.

Prov. xxi. 3. "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable unto the LORD than sacrifice."

Isaiah i. 11. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD; I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats."

Hosea vi. 6. "For I desired mercy and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of GOD more than burnt-offerings."

Micah vi. 7, 8. "Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my

first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy GOD."

The Jews had a rule, that if a rich man and a poor man had a controversy, they must both of them *stand* or *sit*, to avoid partiality.

Virtue would hardly be distinguished from a kind of sensuality, if there were no labour—no opposition—no difficulty in doing our duty. *Dulce est periculum sequi Deum.*

The duty of a judge may oblige him to punish according to the law; but it is the part of a Christian injured to forgive according to the charity of the Gospel.

A judge is not the master but the minister of the law—for the public good, not for his own interest, passion, or will.

A good judge will never desire to make himself feared by his power; but will rather be afraid of abusing it.

The civil magistrate is liable to be excluded from Church communion for such reasons as the spiritual governors shall judge necessary; they are to determine for him, and not he for them, in matters merely spiritual.

Give me, O LORD, the spirit of judgment, (Isaiah xxviii. 6.) that I may govern this Church with wisdom.

Eccles. iv. 9. "Be not faint-hearted when thou sittest in judgment."

A lover of the law will always have an eye to the intent of the law. Matt. xii. 3.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE EXISTING LITURGIES.

All Liturgies now existing, except those in use in Protestant countries, profess to be derived from very remote antiquity. So likely is it, however, that in the lapse of ages, considering the extreme ignorance in which many parts of Christendom have been immersed, interpolations almost to any extent should have crept into the formulæ of the different Churches, that little weight seems at first sight due to them as traditionary depositories of ancient doctrine. Judging from the opinions and character of those to whose custody they have been committed, one would be disposed to treat them rather as accumulations of every kind of superstition, than relics of ancient evangelical simplicity, to examine them rather as exhibitions of the gradual decay of Christianity, than as monuments of what it was.

Unlikely, however, as it might appear beforehand, learned men who have undertaken the laborious task of examining them, have been led to form a different estimate of their value. Certain, indeed, it is that they have been much interpolated, and in parts, corrupted; but it seems to be admitted at last, after long and patient research, that much likewise has been handed down from the first uninterpolated, and that means exist for ascertaining what parts are interpolated, and what pure and genuine.

Among many remarkable facts which have been brought to light respecting the antiquity of existing Liturgies, the following is among the most striking:—

There exists at the present day, scattered through Judæa, Mesopotamia, Syria, and the southern part of Asia Minor, which formerly made up the Patriarchate of Antioch, a set of heretical Christians, called Jacobites or Monophysites, who were anathematized 1383 years since, at the council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451. This ancient sect has from that time to this persisted in its separation from the orthodox Church, and no communion has subsisted between the two: each regarding the other as heretical. For a long time each preserved their separate establishments in the different Churches and dioceses, and each their own patriarch in the metropolitan city. By degrees, however, the Orthodox became the inferior party, and, on the Mahometan invasion, finding themselves no longer able to maintain an independent existence, fell back on the support of the patriarch of Constantinople, whose dependents they acknowledge themselves at the present day. The Monophysites, on the contrary, were patronized by the invaders, and having been thus enabled to support their ancient establishment, remain in undisturbed possession of their sees, and represent the ancient Patriarchate of Antioch. Now these Monophysites use at this day a Liturgy in the Syriac language, which they ascribe to the Apostle St. James; and the remarkable fact about this Liturgy is, that a great part of it coincides with a Greek Liturgy used once a year by the orthodox Church at Jerusalem, expression for expression. So that one must evidently be a translation of the other.

A coincidence of this kind between the most solemn religious rites of two Churches, which have for 1383 years avoided all communion with each other, of course proves the parts which coincide to be more than 1383 years old.

Another remarkable fact, not indeed so striking as this, but perhaps as essentially valuable, is exhibited to us in the Patriarchate of Alexandria. The history of the Monophysites and Orthodox in that country, is much the same as in the Patriarchate of Antioch; except, indeed, that the depression of the Orthodox

has been still more complete. In this Patriarchate the Monophysites still profess to use the ancient Liturgy of the country, which they ascribe to St. Cyril, one of the early patriarchs. It is in the Coptic language, but appears to be a translation from Greek, and is sometimes spoken of as "the Liturgy of St. Mark which Cyril perfected." Now it cannot, indeed, be said in this instance, that any thing resembling this Liturgy is still in use among the Orthodox in Egypt; however, we know, that as late as the twelfth century a Liturgy was in use among them which bore the title of St. Mark's: and very curious it is, that in a remote convent of Calabria, inhabited by oriental monks of the order of St. Basil, a Greek manuscript has been found of the tenth or eleventh century, entitled the Liturgy of St. Mark, evidently intended for the use of Alexandria. It contains a prayer for the raising the waters of the Nile to their just level, and another for "the holy and blessed Pope," the ancient style of the Alexandrian patriarchs: and, on comparing it with the Coptic Liturgy of the Monophysites, it is at once recognised as the same rite, except, indeed, that in a few points it approximates to the Liturgy of Constantinople.

If then it should be thought that St. Mark's Liturgy, as given in this manuscript, is the same St. Mark's Liturgy which was once in use among the Orthodox of Alexandria, we can hardly doubt that, so far as it coincides with that now in use among the Monophysites, both are anterior to the separation of the parties, *i. e.* more than 1383 years old.

Other Liturgies there likewise are, besides those of Antioch and Alexandria, to which we may safely assign very great antiquity. One of these, which bears the name of St. Basil's, and is now universally adopted by the Greek Church, "from the northern shore of Russia to the extremities of Abyssinia, and from the Adriatic and Baltic Seas to the farthest coast of Asia," is believed to have undergone very little alteration, from times still more remote than even the era of the Monophysite schism. A MS. of this Liturgy was found by Montfaucon in the Barbarini Library at Rome, which that profound antiquary pronounced to be above 1000 years old at the time he wrote, *i. e.* 124 years

since, and which, consequently, was written about the time of the Council of Trullo, A. D. 691. Nòw, at the time of this council, we know that not so much as a doubt existed of the genuineness of the text, as it was cited by 227 Eastern Bishops, as an undoubted record of St. Basil's opinions. Their decree opens thus :—*Καὶ γὰρ Βασίλειος ὁ τῆς Καισαρείων ἐκκλησίας Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος, οὗ τὸ κλέος κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην διέδραμεν γεγράφως τὴν μυστικὴν ἡμῖν ἱερουργίαν παραδέδωκεν, κ. τ. λ. . . .* If then we possess the text of St. Basil's Liturgy, such as it was when appealed to on a controverted question only 310 years after it was written, and that too by an assembly so likely to be well-informed respecting its value, we may perhaps admit its genuineness without much hesitation.

Another Liturgy, which can be traced back with tolerable certainty to very remote times, is the Roman Missal. Mr. Palmer has shown that we have abundance of materials for ascertaining the text of this Liturgy, as it stood in the time of Gregory the Great, patriarch of Rome, A. D. 590, by whom it was revised and in some parts enlarged. There also seems to be good reason for believing that one of the MSS. which has been preserved, exhibits it to us in a still earlier stage, such as it was left by Pope Gelasius, its former reviser, about 100 years before the time of Gregory. This ancient MS. was found by Thomasius in the Queen of Sweden's library. It is divided into several books, as the Gelasian Sacramentary appears to have been, and in other respects differs from that of Gregory just where history informs us the Gelasian did. It appears to have been written during, or not long after, the time of Gregory the Great, but in some remote province to which the additions and alterations introduced by that prelate had not yet penetrated. Nay, farther, learned men appear to agree that there exists a MS. still more ancient than this, from which the canon of the mass may be ascertained, as it stood before the revisal of Gelasius, even so long back as the time of Leo the Great, *i. e.* as early as the Monophysite schism. This MS. was found in the library of the Chapter of Verona, and its merits have been very minutely canvassed by the most learned antiquaries. It also deserves to be noticed, that at the time

when the Roman Liturgy was undergoing these successive revisals, a tradition all along prevailed, attributing to one part of it an apostolic origin ; and that this part does not appear to have undergone any change whatever. Vigilius, who was Pope between the times of Gelasius and Gregory, tells us that the "canonical prayers," or what are now called the "Canon of the Mass," had been "handed down as an apostolical tradition." And much earlier we hear the same from Pope Innocent, who adds that the Apostle from whom they derived it was St. Peter.

On the whole, then, it appears that of the existing Liturgies, one, *viz.* that of St. Basil, can be traced with tolerable certainty to the fourth century, and three others to the middle of the fifth ; and that respecting these three a tradition prevailed, ascribing one of them to the Apostle St. James, another to St. Mark, and the third to St. Peter.

But curious as these results are, those which follow from comparing the above Liturgies with others now existing, and with one another, are still more curious. The Liturgies of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, differ so materially as compositions, that neither can with any reason be supposed to have been taken from the other; it is however true, with a singular exception, to be presently noticed, that no other Liturgy either exists now or ever appears to have existed, which is not a copy from one or other of them. The Liturgy of St. Basil, striking as are some of the features in which it differs from that of Antioch, is, nevertheless, evidently a superstructure raised on that basis: the composition of both is the same, *i. e.* the parts which they have in common follow in the same order. The same may be said of the Constantinopolitan Liturgy, commonly attributed to St. Chrysostom, of that of the Armenian Church, and of the florid and verbose compositions in use among the Nestorians of Mesopotamia. So that the Liturgy of Antioch, commonly attributed to St. James, appears to be the basis of all the oriental Liturgies. In the same manner a remarkable correspondence subsists between the Liturgy of Ethiopia and the Alexandrian Liturgy attributed to St. Mark. And so likewise the ancient Liturgies of Milan, and of Roman Africa, which last indeed has not been preserved, and

can only be collected from the writings of the Fathers, are characterized by the marked peculiarities of the Roman Missal of St. Peter. The exception which I above noticed, is the ancient Gothic Liturgy of Gaul and Spain, which from the fragments that have been preserved of it, appears to have agreed in composition with neither of the three; but to have been an independent rite; and this Liturgy, Mr. Palmer, by a very curious argument, traces to the Apostle St. John. Here, then, we arrive at one remarkable result: it appears, from all we can learn, that throughout the whole world, there neither exist now, nor ever have existed, more than four independent forms of Liturgy; a circumstance which, of itself, gives some credibility to the supposition otherwise suggested, that these four were of Apostolic origin.

The confirmation of this supposition, which results from comparing the four independent rites, is, if possible, still more remarkable. For while, on the one hand, the diversity of the compositions proves that their authors, whoever they were, did not feel bound to copy, either from the other, or from any common original; so the identity of the matter proves that they were exactly agreed in sentiment, and intimately conversant with each other's habits of thought. Had these Liturgies resembled one another less, we might have attributed them to sources wholly independent, to the influence of any four great minds, which may have arisen at different times, and acquired ascendency in their own regions of Christendom. Had they differed less, it might have been supposable that some single Saint, though not an Apostle, some Ambrose, or Athanasius, or Cyprian, might gradually have extended his religious influence still more universally. Though, even so, great difficulties would have attended either supposition. As it is, however, we have to look for four persons, each with predominating influence in distinct and distant portions of the world; yet, all so united in thought as to make it certain they had been educated in the same school. Nothing less than this will account at once for the resemblances and differences of the four ancient Liturgies; and this it would be vain to look for after the Apostolic age.

Such is the general character of the argument resulting from a comparison of these curious documents, each of which can independently be traced back to the middle of the fifth century, and which appear, at that time, to have commanded the same exclusive respect as at present.

To institute the comparison here in such a manner as to enable the reader to judge for himself, is, of course, out of the question, involving as it does very minute and extensive researches. The following particulars, however, may perhaps be not altogether uninteresting, however incomplete.

I. It appears from Mr. Palmer's valuable work, that all the ancient Liturgies now existing, or which can be proved ever to have existed, resemble one another in the following points:—

(1.) All of them direct, that previous to communion, those who intend to communicate shall exchange "the kiss of peace."

(2.) In all of them, the more particularly solemn part of the service commences with words exactly answering to the English, "Lift up your hearts," &c. as far as "Holy FATHER, almighty everlasting GOD."

(3.) All contain the Hymn, "Therefore with Angels and Archangels," &c. with very trifling varieties of expression.

(4.) Also, they all contain a Prayer, answering in substance to ours "for the whole state of CHRIST's Church militant:"

(5.) And likewise another Prayer (which has been excluded from the English Ritual) "for the rest and peace of all those who have departed this life in GOD's faith and fear;" concluding with a Prayer for communion with them.

(6.) Also a commemoration of our LORD's words and actions in the institution of the Eucharist, which is the same, almost word for word, in every Liturgy, but is not taken from any of the four Scripture accounts.

(7.) A sacrificial oblation of the Eucharistic bread and wine.

(8.) A prayer of consecration, that GOD will "make the bread and wine the Body and Blood of CHRIST."

(9.) Directions to the Priest for breaking the consecrated bread.

(10.) The LORD's Prayer.

(11.) Communion.

II. These parts are always arranged in one of the four following orders[1].

St. Peter's Liturgy. *Roman, Milanese, African.*	St. James's Liturgy. *Oriental.*
1. Lift up your hearts, &c.	10. The kiss of peace.
2. Therefore with Angels, &c.	1. Lift up your hearts, &c.
3. Prayers for the Church on earth.	2. Therefore with Angels.
4. Consecration Prayer.	5. Commemoration of our LORD's words.
5. Commemoration of our LORD's words.	6. The Oblation.
6. The Oblation.	4. Consecration Prayer.
7. Prayers for the dead.	3. Prayers for the Church on earth.
8. Breaking of bread.	7. Prayers for the dead.
9. The LORD's Prayer.	9. The LORD's Prayer.
10. The kiss of peace.	8. Breaking of bread.
11. Communion.	11. Communion.

[1] The English Reformers prefer an order different from any of these.

ENGLISH ORDER.

3. Prayers for the Church on earth.	5. Commemoration of our LORD's words.
1. Lift up your hearts, &c.	11. Communion.
2. Therefore with Angels, &c.	9. The LORD's Prayer.
4. Consecration.	6. Oblation.

St. Mark's Liturgy. *Egyptian and Ethiopian.*	St. John's Liturgy. *Gallican, Ephesian, and Mozarabic.*
10. The kiss of peace.	3. Prayers for the Church on earth.
1. Lift up your hearts, &c.	7. Prayers for the dead.
3. Prayers for the Church on earth.	10. The kiss of peace.
7. Prayers for the dead.	1. Lift up your hearts, &c.
2. Therefore with Angels, &c.	2. Therefore with Angels, &c.
5. Commemoration of our LORD's words.	5. Commemoration of our LORD's words.
6. The Oblation.	6. The Oblation.
4. Consecration Prayer.	4. Consecration Prayer.
8. Breaking of bread.	8. Breaking of bread.
9. The LORD's Prayer.	9. The LORD's Prayer.
11. Communion.	11. Communion.

Thus it appears that the four original forms from which all the Liturgies in the world have been taken, resemble one another too much to have grown up independently, and too little to have been copied from one another.

III. On a comparison of the different forms of Oblation and Consecration, it will be seen, that in each of the four original Liturgies the Eucharist is regarded as a mystery and as a sacrifice.

THE ROMAN FORM.

This is translated from the Missal now in use in the Church of Rome.

Therefore, O LORD, we beseech Thee graciously to accept this oblation of our bounden service, from us and from thy whole family. Dispose our days in thy peace, and command us to be delivered from eternal damnation, and to be numbered in the congregation of thine elect, through CHRIST our LORD. Amen.

Which oblation do Thou, O God, we beseech Thee, vouchsafe to render, in all respects, blessed, approved, effectual, reasonable, and acceptable; that it may be made unto us the Body and Blood of thy most beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Who, the day before He suffered, took bread into His Holy and venerable hands, and lifting up His eyes to Heaven, to Thee, His God and Father Almighty; giving thanks to Thee; He blessed it, brake it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take and eat ye all of this: for this is my body. In like manner, after He had supped; taking also this glorious cup into His holy and venerable hands, giving thanks likewise unto Thee, He blessed it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take and drink ye all of it: for this is the cup of my blood, of the new and eternal Testament, the Mystery of Faith; which shall be shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins. As often as ye shall do these things, ye shall do them in remembrance of me.

Wherefore, O Lord, we thy servants, and also thy holy people, having in remembrance both the blessed passion of the same thy Son Christ our Lord, and also His resurrection from the dead, and likewise His triumphant ascension into the heavens, offer unto thy glorious Majesty, of thine own gifts and presents, a pure Host, a holy Host, an immaculate Host, the holy bread of eternal life, and the cup of everlasting salvation.

Upon which vouchsafe to look with a propitious and serene countenance, and accept them as thou wert pleased graciously to accept the gifts of thy righteous servant Abel, the sacrifice of our patriarch Abraham, and the holy sacrifice, the immaculate Host, which thy high-priest Melchizedek offered to Thee.

We humbly beseech Thee, O Almighty God, command these things to be carried by the hands of thy holy Angels unto thy High Altar, in the presence of thy divine Majesty, that as many of us as by the participation of this Altar shall receive the most sacred body and blood of thy Son, may be replenished with all heavenly benediction and grace, through the same Christ our Lord.

The Oriental Form.

This is taken from Dr. Brett's translation of the Liturgy of St. James, used at the present day by the Monophysites throughout the Patriarchate of Antioch; and by the Orthodox at Jerusalem, on St. James's day.

In the same night that He was offered, or rather offered up Himself for the life and salvation of the world, taking bread into His holy, immaculate, pure, and immortal hands, looking up to Heaven, and presenting it to Thee, His God and Father, He gave thanks, sanctified, and brake it, and gave it to His Disciples and Apostles, saying—

Deacon.—For the remission of sins and for everlasting life.

Priest continues.—Take, eat: this is my body which is broken and given for you for the remission of sins. *R.* Amen.

Likewise, after supper He took the cup and mixed it with wine and water, and looking up to Heaven, presenting it to Thee, His God and Father, He gave thanks, sanctified and blessed it, and filled it with the Holy Ghost, and gave it to His Disciples, saying, Drink ye all of this; this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed and given for you and for many, for the remission of sins. *R.* Amen. Do this in remembrance of Me. For as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the death of the Son of Man, and confess His resurrection, until His coming again.

People.—O Lord, we show forth thy death, and confess thy resurrection.

Priest continues.—Wherefore, having in remembrance His life-giving passion, salutary cross, death, burial, and resurrection on the third day from the dead; His ascension into heaven, and sitting at the right hand of Thee, His God and Father; and His second bright and terrible appearance, when He shall come with glory to judge the quick and dead, and shall render to every man according to his works: We sinners offer unto Thee, O Lord, this tremendous and unbloody sacrifice, beseeching Thee not to deal with us after our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities: but according to thy clemency and ineffable love to mankind,

overlook and blot out the hand-writing that is against thy servants, and grant us thine heavenly and eternal rewards, such as eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive; even such as Thou hast prepared for them that love Thee.

And reject not this people for me and my sins, O LORD.

Then is repeated thrice.

Priest.—For this people and thy Church make their supplication before Thee.

People.—Have mercy upon us, O LORD GOD, ALMIGHTY FATHER.

Priest continues.—Have mercy upon us, O GOD the ALMIGHTY, have mercy upon us, O GOD our SAVIOUR. Have mercy upon us, O GOD, according to thy great mercy; and send down upon these gifts which are here set before Thee, thy most HOLY SPIRIT, even the LORD and Giver of life, who with THEE, O GOD the FATHER, and with thine only-begotten SON, liveth and reigneth a consubstantial and co-eternal Person: who spake by the Law, by the Prophets, and by the New Testament: descended in the form of a dove upon our LORD JESUS CHRIST in the river Jordan, and rested upon Him, and came down in the shape of fiery tongues upon thy Apostles, when they were assembled on the day of Pentecost, in an upper room of holy and glorious Sion. Send down, O LORD, this thy most HOLY SPIRIT upon us, and upon these holy gifts, here set before Thee. That by His holy, good and glorious presence, He may sanctify and make this bread the body of thy CHRIST. *R.* Amen.

And this cup the precious blood of thy CHRIST. *R.* Amen.

That all who are partakers thereof may obtain remission of their sins and eternal life.

The Egyptian Form.

This is taken from Dr. Brett's translation of the Liturgy of St. Mark, used by the Monophysites at this day throughout the Patriarchate of Alexandria, and by the Orthodox so late as the eleventh century.

In the same night wherein He delivered himself for our sins, and was about to suffer death for mankind, sitting down to supper with His Disciples; He took bread in His holy, spotless, and undefiled hands, and looking up to Thee, His Father, but our God and the God of all, He gave thanks, He blessed, He sanctified, and brake it, and gave it to them, saying, Take, eat.

Deacon.—Attend.

Priest continues.—For this is my body which is broken and given for the remission of sins.

People.—Amen.

Priest continues.—In like manner He took the cup after supper, and mixing it with wine and water, and looking up to Heaven, to Thee, His Father, but our God and the God of all, He gave thanks, He blessed. He filled it with the Holy Ghost, and gave it to His holy and blessed Disciples, saying, Drink ye all of this.

Deacon.—Attend again.

Priest continues.—For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed and given for you and for many, for the remission of sins.

People.—Amen.

Priest continues.—Do this in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye shall eat this bread and drink this cup, ye show forth my death, and confess my resurrection and ascension till my coming again.

Showing forth, therefore, O Lord Almighty, heavenly King, the death of thine only-begotten Son, our Lord, our God, and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and confessing His blessed resurrection from the dead on the third day, and His sitting at the right hand of Thee, His God and Father; and also looking for His second terrible appearance, when he shall come in righteousness to judge both

the quick and dead, and to render to every man according to his works. We, O LORD, have set before Thee thine own, out of thine own gifts; and we pray and beseech thee, O thou lover of mankind, to send down from thy holy heaven, the habitation of thy dwelling, from thine infinite bosom, the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth, the Holy One, the LORD, the Giver of life, who spake in the Law, in the Prophets, and in the Apostles; who is every where, and fills all things; sanctifying whom He pleases, not ministerially, but according to His own will: simple in nature, but various in operation. The fountain of all divine graces, consubstantial with Thee, proceeding from Thee, and sitting with Thee in the throne of thy kingdom, together with thy SON our LORD, our GOD, and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

Send down thine HOLY SPIRIT upon us, and upon these loaves and these cups, that the ALMIGHTY GOD may sanctify and thoroughly consecrate them: making the bread the body.

People.—Amen.

And the cup, the blood of the New Testament of our LORD himself, our GOD and SAVIOUR, and supreme King JESUS CHRIST.

Deacon.—Descend ye Deacons.

Priest.—That they may be to us who partake of them, the means of faith, sobriety, health, temperance, sanctification, the renewing of our soul, our body, and spirit; the communion of the blessedness of eternal life and immortality; the glorifying of thy holy name; and the remission of sins.

The Egyptian rite contains elsewhere the following words, resembling a part of the Roman oblation, which would otherwise seem to stand by itself.

"Receive, O LORD, unto thy holy Heaven, and intellectual Altar in the Heaven of Heavens, by the ministry of Archangels, the Eucharistical praises of those that offer sacrifices and oblations to Thee.... Receive them as Thou didst the gifts of thy righteous Abel, the sacrifice of our Father Abraham, the incense of Zacharias, the alms of Cornelius, and the widow's mite."

The Gallican Form.

The following fragment was translated by Dr. Brett, from Mabillon's edition of an ancient MS. in the Queen of Sweden's Library.

O Jesus, the good High Priest, come and be in the midst of us, as Thou wast in the midst of thy disciples; sanctify this oblation, that being sanctified, we may receive it by the hand of thy holy Angel, O Holy Lord and eternal Redeemer.

Our Lord Jesus Christ in that night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, He blessed and brake it, and gave it to His Disciples, saying, Take and eat: this is my Body which shall be delivered for you. Do this as oft as ye eat it, in remembrance of Me. Likewise also the cup, after He had supped, saying, This is the cup of the New Testament, in my blood, which shall be shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.

As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye shall show the Lord's death till He shall come in brightness from the Heavens. *R.* Amen.

We, O Lord, observing these thy gifts and precepts, lay upon thine Altar the sacrifices of bread and wine, beseeching the deep goodness of thy mercy, that the holy and undivided Trinity may sanctify these Hosts, by the same Spirit through which uncorrupt virginity conceived Thee in the flesh: that when it has been received by us with fear and veneration, whatever dwells in us contrary to the good of the soul may die; and whatever dies, may never rise again!

"We therefore observing these His commandments, offer unto Thee the holy gift of our salvation, beseeching Thee that Thou wouldest vouchsafe to send thy Holy Spirit upon these solemn mysteries, that they may become to us a true Eucharist, in the name of Thee and thy Son, and of the Holy Spirit, that they may confer eternal life and an everlasting kingdom on us who are going to eat and drink of them in the transformation of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, Thine only-begotten Son."

Such is the view taken of the consecration and oblation of the Eucharist in the four independent Christian Liturgies. It is well worth the consideration of such Protestant bodies as have rejected the ancient forms.

Further information may be found respecting these remarkable documents, in the valuable works, already quoted, of Dr. Brett and Mr. Palmer. It is, however, much to be wished, that correct editions of the original documents were in the hands of every one. It may perhaps be said, without exaggeration, that next to the Holy Scriptures, they possess the greatest claims on our veneration and study.

OXFORD,
The Feast of St. Philip and St. James.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

BISHOP BULL ON THE ANCIENT LITURGIES.

(*From his* XIII*th Sermon.*)

[To Timothy,] to this public person, to this great bishop of the Church, is this charge given by St. Paul in my text: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men," &c. He was to take care that such prayers should be made in all churches and congregations under his inspection and jurisdiction.

And how could he do this, but by providing by his authority that there should be set forms of prayer, framed according to this rule, given him by the Apostle, to be used in those churches? Sure I am, the primitive Catholic Church understood this to be the meaning of the Apostle. Hence, in all the churches of Christ over the world, however distant from each other, we we find set forms of public prayers, suited and conforming to this direction of the Apostle.

And, indeed, if we consult all the ancient liturgies extant at this day, we shall find this observation to be most true; they are all framed and composed according to this rule of the Apostle.

And it is observable, t hat however those ancient liturgies had been altered and corrupted in after times by many additions and interpolations, yet there are in all of them still remaining many excellent and divine forms of prayer and thanksgiving, wherein they do all perfectly agree, and which, therefore, cannot reasonably be thought to have any other original than apostolical order and appointment, delivered to the several nations and people together with the first preaching and planting of Christianity among them.

Gilbert & Rivington, Printers,

Such, for example, is the *Sursum corda* in the Office of the Communion, the Priest saying, "Lift up your hearts;" and the people answering, "We lift them up unto the LORD." There is no Liturgy in any church of CHRIST to this day but hath this form.

Such is the excellent form of Thanksgiving, in the same Office of the Communion, to be performed by the Priest and people; the Priest saying, "Let us give thanks unto our Lord God;" and the people answering, "it is meet and right so to do." This form also is to be found in all the most ancient Liturgies.

Such also is the Doxology, or glorification of the ever-blessed Trinity: "Glory be to the Father," &c.

"I add to what hath been already observed, the consent of all the Christian churches in the world, however distant from each other, in the prayer of Oblation of the Christian Sacrifice in the Holy Eucharist, or Sacrament of the LORD's Supper; which consent is indeed wonderful. All the ancient liturgies agree in this Form of Prayer, almost in the same words, but fully and exactly in the same sense, order, and method; which whosoever attentively considers, must be convinced that this order of prayer was delivered to the several churches in the very first plantation and settlement of them. Nay, it is observable, that this Form of Prayer is still retained in the very Canon of the Mass, at this day used in the Church of Rome, though the Form doth manifestly contradict and overthrow some of the principal articles of their new faith. For from this very form of prayer, still extant in their Canon, a man may effectually refute those two main doctrines of their Church, the doctrine of Purgatory, and that of Transubstantiation. . . . Thus, by a singular providence of GOD, that ancient, primitive, and apostolic Form of Prayer still remains in the Liturgy of that Church, as a convincing testimony against her latter innovations and corruptions of the Christian doctrine. But this by the way.

The same harmony and consent of the ancient liturgies (*i. e.* services) is to be found in the office of Baptism, where the person to be baptized is obliged first to "renounce the Devil and all his works, the pomp and vanity of the world," &c., and then to profess his faith in the Holy Trinity, "God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." This Form is to be found in the liturgies of all the churches of CHRIST throughout the world, almost

in the very same words, and is therefore doubtless of primitive and apostolical origin. . . .

Other instances of the like nature I could give you, if the time would permit. But these I think are sufficient to show that there were set, prescribed Offices and Forms of Prayer and praise, and professions of faith, delivered to all the Churches of CHRIST by the Apostles or their immediate successors; many of those Forms (notwithstanding the manifold corruptions and depravations of the primitive Liturgies in after times) being still retained, and unanimously used in all the Churches of CHRIST to this day.

The following account of the Thanksgiving in the Holy Eucharist, mentioned by Bishop Bull in the above extract, is from Bingham, Antiq. xv. 3.

" As soon as the Common Prayers were ended, and they had saluted one another with a kiss, bread, and wine and water were brought to the President; who receiving them, gave praise and glory to the FATHER of all things by the SON and HOLY SPIRIT, and made a long thanksgiving for the blessings which he vouchsafed to bestow upon them. And when he had ended the prayers and thanksgiving, all the people that were present, answered with acclamation, *Amen.*

After the same manner Irenæus, " We offer unto Him His own gifts, thereby declaring the communication and truth both of flesh and spirit. For as the bread, which is of the earth, after the invocation of GOD upon it, is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two parts, the one earthly, the other heavenly: so all our bodies, receiving the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, whilst they live in hopes of a resurrection. But we offer these things to Him, not as if He stood in need of them, but as giving Him thonks for His gifts, and sanctifying the creature."

So Origen says, " They eat the bread that was offered to the Creator, with prayer and thanksgiving for the gifts that he had bestowed on them. . . ."

Cyril of Jerusalem more particularly specifices the substance of this thanksgiving in his Mystical Catechism, saying, " After this we make mention of the heaven, and earth, and sea, &c. . . ." This is much the same with the thanksgiving in St. James's

Liturgy, which was used in the Church of Jerusalem, in this form: "It is very meet and right, becoming us and our duty, that we should praise Thee, and celebrate Thee with hymns, and give thanks unto Thee, the Maker of all creatures, visible and invisible, the Treasure of all good, the Fountain of life and immortality, the God and Lord of all things, whom the Heavens, and the Heaven of Heavens praise, and all the host of them; the sun and moon and the whole company of stars; the earth, the sea, and all that are in them; the celestial congregation of Jerusalem; the Church of the first born, who are written in heaven; the spirits of just men and prophets, the souls of martyrs and apostles; angels and archangels, thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, the tremendous hosts, and cherubims with many eyes, and seraphims with six wings, with two whereof they cover their faces, and with two their feet, and with two they fly, crying out incessantly one to another, and singing with loud voices the triumphal song of the magnificence of Thy Glory, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy Glory, Hosanna in the Highest. Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest.

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The Feast of St. Barnabas.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

BISHOP WILSON'S MEDITATIONS ON HIS SACRED OFFICE.

No. VI.—FRIDAY.

ORDINATION.

Question from the Office of Ordination.—WILL YOU BE FAITHFUL IN ORDAINING, SENDING, OR LAYING HANDS UPON OTHERS? *Ans.* I WILL SO BE, BY THE HELP OF GOD.

Almighty GOD, who knowest the hearts of men, govern my mind, that I may faithfully discharge this great trust, that neither through fear, favour, interest, or negligence, I may ever promote any person to the sacred charge of CHRIST's flock.

Bless all those who have already given themselves to Thy immediate service, and labour with me in this ministration; be with us, and guide us, and help us, for Thy promise' sake, for Thine honour's sake, and for the sake of JESUS CHRIST, that we may teach well, and that we may be examples of all the graces and virtues which we recommend to others.

Direct all such as are designed to serve at Thine altar; sanctify their persons, their studies, their intentions, and affections.

And grant that no unworthiness in me may ever hinder Thy gifts and graces from descending upon those whom I shall ordain to thy service, for JESUS CHRIST's sake. Amen.

Jer. iii. 15. "O LORD, give us pastors according to Thine own heart, which shall feed us with knowledge and understanding." Ministers being the officers of God's household, we must depend upon Him in the choice of them, and not upon human motives.

Acts xiii. 3. "And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." All Christians being concerned in this affair, all ought to fast and pray, in order to have faithful pastors. *Quesn.*

Apostolical usages ought to be kept up to, as proceeding from JESUS CHRIST Himself.

Matt. ix. 38. "Pray ye the LORD of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest." O gracious LORD, look down in mercy upon this church, at this time. Provide it with faithful labourers, such as shall have a true compassion for the souls committed to their care, and a knowledge and zeal answerable to the account they are to give. Grant that we may all preach the truth as it is in Jesus. Give a blessing to our labours, that we may see the fruits of them, in the repentance and conversion of ourselves, and of all sinners. Make us truly sensible, that when we labour for our flock, we labour for ourselves and for Thy glory. And pardon us, gracious GOD, whereinsoever we have been wanting in any part of our duty. Awaken, and touch all our hearts most powerfully from above, that we may not forget our ordination vows. And for JESUS CHRIST's sake, grant that I may not be answerable for the sins, and the dreadful mischiefs that may follow, if not hindered by Thy grace. Amen. The conversion of souls is Thine, O LORD, and not ours; prosper Thou Thine own work. It is not in us to save souls. Let us not sacrifice to our own net, but use the means, and ascribe all the glory to GOD; we of ourselves have nothing whereof to glory.

Luke vi. 12, 13. "And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to GOD. And when it was day, He called unto Him His disciples: and of them He chose twelve, whom He also named apostles;" viz. that their very title might put them in mind of their mission. O blessed LORD and Master, let Thy tender regard for Thy church make me ever solicitous at the throne of grace, in behalf of those I send into Thy vineyard; and grant that no unworthiness in me may hinder Thy gifts and graces from descending upon those whom I shall ordain to Thy service.

For the sake of this Church, which Thou hast purchased with Thy most precious blood, enable them for the work unto which they are called, that they may teach well, and they they may live well, and be examples of all the holy graces and virtues which they shall recommend to others. Sanctify their persons and their labours, that they may be respected by their people; and, for Thy authority in them, be heard and obeyed, that they may be able to give a comfortable account at the great day. Amen.

John xxi. 15. "Jesus said unto Peter, Lovest thou me? Yea, Lord: Thou knowest that I love Thee. He said unto Him, Feed my sheep." O Sovereign Pastor, who lovedst and gavest Thy life for us, make our love for Thee, and our care of Thy sheep, so great and sincere, that we may feed them constantly, and diligently watch over them, that not one of them may be lost through my neglect, or the fault of those whom I send into Thy service. Make us every day mindful of our charge; and every day more able to perform it, remembering the account we must give. Grant this for the glory of Thy grace, and the good of Thy church, which Thou hast purchased with Thy most precious blood.

John xxi. 7. "Jesus said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me?" Though Jesus Christ knew Peter's heart, yet He asked him three times whether he loved Him? To teach those to whom the power of ordaining belongs, to be very solicitous and careful, and not content themselves with a slight inquiry into the dispositions and qualifications of those who are to have the care of souls committed to them. It being entirely at the bishop's discretion whether he will admit any one to the order of priest or deacon, and being not obliged to give any reason for his refusal[1]; he will be more accountable to God, both for ordaining unfit persons, and for any prejudice against such as are worthy. As we consult God, as Jesus Christ Himself did, when we ordain men to His service, so should we consult Jesus Christ, when we assign them a place in His family. Would Jesus Christ have given this man the charge of the souls of

[1] Vide Clerg. Vade-Mecum, p. i. p. 42.

this parish? That we may have the comfort of knowing that we enter into the ministry by a choice which proceeded from God, we must have some assurance from our own hearts, that the glory of God, the good of souls, was in our intention, and that we were called regularly, and according to the intention of the Church.

Ember Week.

All persons being concerned in the choice of pastors, every body ought to pray for good pastors.

1 Cor. i. 1. "Paul, called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother." Not through his own will—not through motives of worldly lucre, &c.

Deacons.

1 Tim. iii. 10. "Let these first be proved; then let them use the office of a Deacon, being found blameless." It is not sufficient to secure the dignity of the ministry even in its lower ministries, that men have taken up virtuous resolutions, unless they be also proved, to see whether those resolutions will continue, &c.

N.B. To give every person I ordain some short hints *in writing*, of the nature, dignity, several branches, hazard of not discharging them faithfully, &c. of the ministry.

Matth. xxviii. 20. "Lo! I am with you." The chief care of a minister of Christ should be, not to render himself unworthy to have Christ present with him in the exercise of his ministry.

John xvii. 16. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." The repetition of this truth ought to make us sensible how different our life ought to be from that of worldly people.

The True Pastor.

1 Pet. v. 1, 2, 3, 4. "The elders I exhort: Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being

ensamples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

N.B. We must feed the flock, not live in idleness ;—not with imperiousness as over subjects, but with love as over brethren ; not with an eye to self-interest, but with regard to an heavenly reward.

Apostles (Envoys).

So Jesus Christ called the twelve ; that the world might know from whom they had their mission, and that such as are not sent by Him, and by those that have their powers from Him, are not His apostles.

Luke vi. 16. "And Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor." A man may have a lawful call to the priesthood, to dignities and benefices ; and yet, for want of answering the ends of his calling, may be a traitor to the Church, to Christ, and to his own soul. The good Lord grant that I may often think of this with great seriousness.

Luke vi. 39. "Can the blind lead the blind ?" It belongs to Thee, O Holy Spirit of grace, to send such guides into Thy Church as may lead Thy people in the right way, and to be the guide of those guides. O do so, for Thy mercies' sake, to this Church and People. Ignorance in pastors, forasmuch as it is likely to destroy the foundation, is sometimes worse than vice itself, being the occasion of superstition, disorders, and infinite evil consequences, taking error for truth and truth for error.

N.B. Remembering, that a minister of Christ can save himself but only by labouring to save others. The business of the ministry is, to preach, to make men love, and to confirm them in, the truths of the Gospel. Happy that pastor, whose life and zeal, and labours, do all testify, that he loves his flock, and that he loves them for Christ's sake. Nothing can supply the want of such a pastor's presence. They whom God, by a terrible judgment, leaves to enter into the ministry solely of themselves, are generally puffed up with a carnal notion of its dignity ; while they that through His mercy are called to it, at the same time that they know its dignity, are humbled under a sense of its

weight, and the account they must one day give. Such as the heart of the pastor is, such is his behaviour. He who suffers the priesthood to become vile in his own person, does not remember, that he is an ambassador of CHRIST. The dignity is great, and so ought the sanctity to be, of one who is in CHRIST's stead [1].

2 Cor. vi. 3. "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed." A pastor's life must not contradict his doctrine. He must preach by his actions.

2 Cor. vi. 4, 5, &c. "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of GOD, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the HOLY GHOST, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth [preaching it sincerely], by the power of GOD [depending entirely upon His assistance], by the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left [defending us both in prosperity and adversity], by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, but yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed, [believing that GOD chastens his servants not to destroy them]; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, [rejoicing in afflictions]; as poor, yet making many rich, [with true, not perishing riches]; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things, [possessing all things in depending upon GOD.]"

1 Tim. v. 22. "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partakers of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." A bishop engages to answer before GOD for such persons as he by advice, ordination, &c. causes to enter into a state of life so very hazardous, and which requires so great a stock of virtues. It is happy for a minister of GOD, that the life he is to lead, and the very outward acts he has vowed to perform, will help to change his heart, and create in him those dispositions which will make him like his Great Master. For instance; he has solemnly promised to read the Holy Scriptures daily; he will therefore have daily

[1] 2 Cor. v. 20.

before his eyes the precepts, the instructions, the example of CHRIST; the rewards and punishments of the life to come. He is obliged to *catechise;* and the more careful he is to instruct others, the more effectually he will learn himself how far we are fallen from GOD, and what pains we must take to be restored to the image and favour of GOD. He has promised *to lead an holy and exemplary life.* If he does not do this sincerely, he will be the scorn of men now, and of devils hereafter. It will be impossible to converse with *poor and needy people,* and to seek out for help for them, without partaking of the spirit and compassion of the blessed JESUS, who laid down His life for them. If he is careful *to read divine service* distinctly, with deliberation and gravity, it will beget devotion in himself, as well as in those that hear him. If his *sermons* be plain and practical, they will affect his own heart, as well as the hearts of those he preaches to. Every child he *baptises* puts him in mind of the vows that are upon himself. And he cannot administer the other *sacrament* as he ought to do, but it must needs fill his soul with a thousand holy ideas and devout thoughts; with an holy *fear,* lest he should offer the prayers of the faithful with polluted lips, or distribute the bread of life with unclean hands:—with an ardent love for JESUS CHRIST, whose love and death he commemorates;—with a perfect charity for all the world for whom he died. And the oftener he administers this sacrament, the more he will find his graces increased. *In visiting sick and dying persons,* he will be put in mind of his own mortality; and in fitting them as he ought to do for the account they are going to give, he will be put in mind of the much greater he is himself to give. When he *exhorts, reproves, admonishes* others, it will bring to his mind the words of the apostle, *Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself!* When he calls to mind, that he has promised *all faithful diligence,* &c. he will give himself *wholly* to these things, and will be ashamed to be found wholly taken up with business which no way relates to the salvation of souls. If he is *diligent in prayer,* which he promised to be, GOD will certainly enlighten his mind with saving truth and grace. In short; if he has an ardent desire to save souls, and really strives to do it as effectually as he

can, he will be beloved of God, assisted by His Spirit; he will see the fruit of his labours; he will secure his own peace and hope, and will give an account with joy when his Lord calls for him. One of the most certain marks of a divine call is, when it is the full purpose of a man's heart, to live for Jesus Christ and His Church.

John xvii. 16. "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." O Lord, make us truly sensible how very different our lives ought to be from the lives of worldly people, that we may avoid their maxims, all that is curious, useless, light, and vain, and live up to our character. Mercy and tenderness for sinners, and faithfulness to the justice of God, are characters inseparable in a true pastor.

John x. 11. "The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep." He gives his life, by giving his labour, in taking all occasions of instructing them; in employing his thoughts for their good; in praying for them continually, and rendering God propitious to them; in sacrificing his ease and peace for them, by delivering truths which the world will not receive without unkind returns; he gives up the dearest friendships, when they stand in competition with truth and righteousness; he gives up all worldly satisfactions, when he does not look upon what is *lawful*, but what is *expedient;* he sacrifices his inclinations, though never so innocent, rather than offend any; he submits to the humility and poverty of the Gospel, that he may give no example of pride and luxury to his flock; he dares not be even a witness of disorders, lest he should encourage them by his presence. It is thus he must be the light of the world, and without this he cannot satisfy the duties of his charge; and it is thus he is to give his life for his sheep.

Mark vi. 8. "Take nothing for their journey save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse." The ecclesiastical ministry requires a great disengagement from the world, to take away all suspicion, that the clergy act only out of self-interest. Whoever is not ready to part with all, rather than be wanting to his duty, is not worthy to be a successor to the Apostles. We shall never be able to establish the kingdom of

God in the hearts of men, so long as we do not appear fully persuaded of those truths which we preach.

Fees.

Can. 135. No fee or money shall be received, either by the archbishop or any bishop, either directly or indirectly, for admitting of any into sacred orders, nor any to his servants or officers, above ten shillings for parchment, wax, &c. For Letters Testimonial of ordination are no part of the ordination, but only taken afterwards for the security of the person ordained, which if he neglect to take, it is at his own peril [1].

Ordination.

The example of Jesus Christ, before He ordained the Apostles, shows us, that in this choice we ought to depend upon God, and pray for His direction and blessing.

Catechising.

Can. 59. Ministers shall, every Sunday evening and holyday, for half an hour at least, examine and instruct in the Church Catechism; and he that neglects to do so, after reproof, to be first suspended, afterwards excommunicated. The neglect of this duty makes the discourses of the pulpit of very little use. People do not understand the very words made use of in the Gospel.

INSTITUTION.

Persons to be instituted shall exhibit orders and testimonials, and be examined [2].

Reasons for refusing Institutions.

Lack of Learning; of which the bishop is the sole judge, and not accountable to any temporal court, but only to a superior

[1] Codex Can. Eccl. Ang. p. 177.

[2] Can. 39.

spiritual Judge. And a person's being ordained, licensed, and approved by another bishop, does not take away the right which every bishop has to examine and judge [1].

Lack of Language; which renders a person incapable of the cure. Nor does it avail, that the language may be learnt, or that the duty might be discharged by a curate. And the Canon Law requires, that where there is a mixture of languages, the priest shall understand both [2].

Other Causes.

Whatever is sufficient to deprive, is sufficient cause to refuse institution.

Mala in se:—Incontinence, drunkenness, murder, man-slaughter, heresy, schism, simony, perjury. The bishop must signify the cause of his refusal specially, that the proper court, if application be made elsewhere, may be able to judge whether the refusal be just, except in the case of insufficiency; for it has been judged in parliament, that it is sufficient to set forth—"Quod persona in literaturâ minus sufficiens seu capax ad habendam dictam ecclesiam." The bishop, having the care of all the souls in his diocese, is bound in conscience to see them well taken care of, by committing them to fit persons.

Acts i. 24. "And they prayed and said, Thou Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two Thou hast chosen." Should not this make patrons and bishops to tremble, to see with what caution, devotion, &c. even the Apostles themselves proceeded in the choice of *fit persons to serve in the sacred ministry of the Church?*

A Christian Priest.

Let him remember, that he himself is a man and a sinner; that he is ordained for men *only* in things pertaining to God; that he is not to live an idle life, but to offer, &c.; that is, to perform the duties of his calling; to appease the justice of God, by offering the prayers, the oblations, &c. of the people; to

[1] Codex, p. 850. [2] Ibid. p. 851.

have bowels of compassion towards sinners; to instruct the ignorant and them that are out of the way; never to forget his own infirmities, that he may treat sinners with compassion; to pray much for himself and for his people; to stay till he is called into the ministry: it is an honour, and to be conferred as it was on Aaron; to keep his flock, by his vigilance, from falling into ignorance in relation to the truths of Christianity; to suit his instructions to the capacities of his hearers, and to their peculiar wants; and not to fill their heads with vain amusements, which signify little to their salvation[1]. O LORD, abandon not Thy flock to wolves, but send them pastors after Thine own heart.

Num. xviii. 1. "The LORD said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary;" that is, they shall carry them away by the sacrifices which they shall offer for them, especially on the day of expiation.

Ecclus. vii. 29. "Fear the LORD with all thy soul, and reverence His priests.—Love Him that made thee with all thy strength, and forsake not His ministers; but give the priest his portion as it is commanded." A lawful call affords us a good ground to hope for all necessary assistance, and grace to do our duty, and for mercy for all our involuntary defects.

CLERGY.

I beseech Thee, O GOD, for them, and for myself; that, in the exercise of our ministry, we may depend much upon Thee; that we may learn from Thee what we ought to speak concerning Thee; that we may constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for righteousness' sake; that we may live and act as in the place of CHRIST, doing nothing unbecoming that character; and that we may preserve an apostolical firmness of mind under the vexations and persecutions of this world. *Amen.*

[1] Heb. v.

Faults of the Clergy.

Let it be considered, what is the great design of the generality of the Clergy of these days:—To appear learned rather than pious; to get preferment, riches, and to live at ease. This makes them satisfied with a mere speculative knowledge in divinity.

Luke v. 5. "We have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing." And it is much to be feared, that the little good we see done by our sermons is owing to the neglect of praying for God's blessing upon our labours. *Sermons* should be plain, practical, and tending to the salvation of those that hear them. Remember, that all useful truths must come from the spirit of truth, and therefore are to be prayed for. Do holy things after an holy manner. He that reads the service negligently, betrays a great want of piety in himself, and begets contempt and indevotion in others.

Lord's Supper.

Christians are too often admitted without knowing the meaning of this holy institution. The consequence is, they fancy they are good Christians, and are in danger of perishing without knowing it.

Lives of the Clergy.

They should consider, that they are taken from amongst men, to minister in things pertaining to God, and therefore are not to live like those from whom they are taken. They are restrained from many things which others practise without reproach or scruple. The maxims of the world are not to be our rule. To desire to be esteemed; to get as much of this world as we well can; to stick at nothing to gain an end; to despise those below us; to live without taking the cross, without self-denial, &c.; to admire what the world admires. By these things, the ministry is blamed and brought into contempt. Look at home! a sad reproach where occasion is given. Remember, that a con-

tempt of the Clergy will be attended with a contempt of the Gospel, and of God Himself at last. More sinners have been converted by holy than by learned men. It is the greatest presumption to pretend to heal others of a distemper I labour under myself.

John viii. 46. "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Here is a pattern of a pastor. He who would edify by his sermons, must be that same virtuous, sober, serious, pious man in his life and conversation; he will then be heard with respect and reverence. If a Clergyman is eager after pleasures, the world and its idols, trifling and vain in life, all he says from the pulpit will signify nothing. He that religiously practises himself what he teaches others, preaches effectually. No man can teach well, who does not live well. It is true, the faith is not built upon the lives of those that preach it, but upon the Word of God. A bad life exposes Christians to great temptations, &c.

John xxi. 16. "Simon, lovest thou me?" &c. This should teach us, that nothing but a sincere love for God, and for the souls of men, which He loved so well as to redeem them by His own Son, can carry us through the work of the ministry. How shall we attain to such a love? By prayer; by reading the Scriptures; by instructing the poor, the young, after such a manner as to affect our own hearts; by visiting, relieving, comforting, sick and needy people, &c. These will pray for you, and God will hear their prayers, and increase His love, &c.

Difficulties.

If the motives which determined you to take holy orders were the glory of God, and the good of souls, He will enable you to bear and get the better of all difficulties.

Preacher. Sermons.

The design of religion being to lead men to the knowledge of God, how He is to be worshipped, appeased, honoured; and to make men holy, that they may be happy when they die; the great business of a preacher should be, to show how the Christian

religion, and all its parts contribute to this end. They that recommend eternal possession to others, ought to show by their lives, that they are themselves verily persuaded of the vanity of all earthly pleasures, avoiding superfluities, &c. JESUS CHRIST preached up the contempt of the world, by contemning it himself. A pastor's knowledge need not extend so far as is imagined. If he knows the Scriptures, and what concerns the kingdom of GOD, and the way of leading souls thither, he knows sufficient. We must speak to the heart as well as to the understanding. While we attack men's reason only, they will hear with patience; but when we attack the heart and its corruption, then they are uneasy. I would rather send away an hearer smiting his breast, than please the most learned audience with a fine sermon against any vice. Let people feel that you are in earnest, that you believe and are deeply affected with the great truths you would recommend. Avoid such discourses and subjects as would divert the mind, without instructing it. Never consult your own fancy in the choice of subjects, but the necessities of your flock.

Necessary Subjects.

A concern for what may come hereafter; a firm hope of immortality; a fear of a judgment to come, and of hell torments. Remember, that your own salvation depends very much upon the salvation of your flock. A man may flatter himself with keeping fair with the world, by not telling them the danger they are in. This was not the way of JESUS CHRIST [1]. A preacher ought to advance nothing but what he has received from JESUS CHRIST. *My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me* [2]. With what truth can it be said, that your sheep hear your voice, when you speak of matters above their capacity, or in a language or terms which they do not understand? Can any man imitate a greater master of eloquence than JESUS CHRIST was, whose great excellence appears in making great truths understood by the meanest capacity? The great end of our ministry, and our

[1] John vii. 7. [2] John vii. 16.

great delight, should be to destroy the kingdom of Satan. To have an eye to the learned part of our audience, who will not very likely profit by you, rather than to the poor in spirit, whom God designs to save, is very wrong. He that considers that he is God's ambassador to his people; that he speaks from God to them; that Jesus Christ speaks by him; will labour with sincerity and devotion for the salvation of souls [1]. God would have all men see, that the success of the Gospel depends upon His grace, and therefore preachers should be humble, meek, charitable, &c. It is too often that preachers perplex those whom they should instruct, either by proving things which want no proof,—the being of a God, &c., or by proposing useless questions and doubts; or speaking of things above the capacities of the common people. There is a great deal of difference betwixt people admiring a preacher, and being edified by his sermons.

Test of a good Preacher.

We count him a good physician whose patients we see cured. If the people are cured of their intemperance, lying, &c. his works will speak for him.

1 Cor. iii. 7. "Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." We must depend on God for success, not take that to ourselves which belongs to God alone. It is God who gives His ministers, *such as are humble*, power over the hearts and souls of men; when distrusting themselves, they ascribe all the glory to God. We take the work out of the hands of God, when we are pleased with what we have done, and rob Him of the honour due to Him alone. There have been many who, without any great learning or eloquence, yet by their communication in an humble and low way, have instructed and converted more than famous preachers; for they preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus, placing all their confidence in God.

[1] 2 Cor. ii. 17.

The Blessing of Levi.

Deut. xxxiii. 11. "Bless, LORD, his substance, and accept the work of his hands. Smite through the loins of them that rise up against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again." This is a prophetical declaration of the dreadful punishment of such as shall oppose the priesthood.

No. VII.—SATURDAY.

ALMS.

Question from the Office of Ordination.—WILL YOU SHOW YOURSELF GENTLE, AND BE MERCIFUL FOR CHRIST'S SAKE TO POOR AND NEEDY PEOPLE, AND TO ALL STRANGERS DESTITUTE OF HELP?—*Ans.* I WILL SO SHOW MYSELF, BY GOD'S HELP.

Upon one of the days of the week (*κατὰ μίαν Σαββάτων*) let every one of you lay by him in store as GOD hath prospered him [1].

Gen. xxviii. 20. "Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If GOD will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, then shall the LORD be my GOD; and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

Luke xi. 41. "But rather give alms of such things as you have (or as you are able) and all things are clean unto you." That is, proportion your alms to your estate, lest GOD proportion your estate to your alms [2].

Luke xii. 33. "Sell that ye have, and give alms: provide yourselves bags which wax not old; a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth cor-

[1] 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

[2] Bishop Beveridge.

rupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." This is still a necessary Christian duty, whatever men think of it; to part with our worldly enjoyments for the sake of CHRIST. *To sell all;* that is, to renounce all the pleasures, and pomp, and enjoyment, which wealth affords, as if we had actually parted with it; to take to a man's self no more of his estate than necessity requires; and to make the remainder the support of the poor and distressed:—It being utterly impossible to take delight in the enjoyments of riches, and to love GOD with all the soul. If GOD is our only happiness, we shall of course be *dead, crucified,* to the world. *Give to the poor,* said our LORD to the rich young man whom He loved. Had there been a better way of disposing of his estate, He would certainly have told him.

Matth. vi. 1, 2. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them. Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. Thy Father, which seeth in secret, Himself shall reward thee openly." By *vanity* we lose both our riches and our reward. It is vanity to boast of our alms, and it is vanity to take pleasure in reflecting upon them. It is sufficient that GOD will remember them.

Tobit xii. 8. "It is better to give alms than to lay up gold."

Deut. xv. 7. "If there shall be a poor man within any of thy gates, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt freely lend him sufficient for his need. Thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him, because that for this thing the LORD thy GOD shall bless thee in all thy works."

Psalm xli. 1. "Blessed be the man that provideth for the sick and needy: the LORD shall deliver him in the time of trouble."

Matth. v. 7. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

Ecclus. iv. 8. "Bow down thine ear to the poor, and give him a friendly answer with meekness; be as a father unto the fatherless, and as an husband unto the widow; so shalt thou be

as the Son of the Most High, and He shall love thee more than thy mother doth."

Ecclus. xxix. 11. "Lay up thy treasure according to the commandment. It shall bring thee more profit than gold, it shall deliver thee from all afflictions, it shall fight for thee against thine enemies," &c.

Is. lviii. 10, 11. "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day. And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." Do not imagine that all that belongs to your Church belongs to you. You have indeed a right to live by the altar, but not in luxury[1]. The Church has not had worse enemies, than such as have been raised to estates out of her patrimony. This should open the eyes of those who make no other use of Church livings than to provide portions, raise estates and families, enrich relations, &c. from which practices the good LORD keep me. The goods of this world, much more the goods of the Church, are mere depositums, put into the hands of men for the common good—of the Church and of mankind[2].

Col. iii. 2. "Set your affections on things above." It is more to our advantage to have the prayers of a poor, good man, than the smiles of the greatest man on earth.

Deut. x. 18, 19. "The LORD loveth the stranger; love ye therefore the stranger; give him food and raiment," &c.

Mark x. 21. "Sell what thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me." My GOD! we think we love Thee above all things, when, without being sensible of it, we love a thousand things better; but as we hope for heaven, we must sacrifice even what we love most. This is a necessary duty now; and though it be a very, very difficult one, yet *to Thee all things are possible. To sell* is only an expression for a disregard for riches;

[1] St. Bern. Ep. 2.

[2] Dr. Moore's Div. Dial.

such as are, being dead to the world, crucified, born again, overcome the world; all which denote that temper which Christianity requires.

Matth. xxv. 40. "In as much (for as often) as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." *As often!*—Who then would miss any occasion? *The least:*—Who then would despise any object? *To me:*—So that in serving the poor, we serve JESUS CHRIST. O comfortable declaration! It is not out of cruelty or indigence, that CHRIST suffers any of His members to want or be in misery, but to give others an opportunity of exercising their faith and their love, and of making some amends for their mis-expences by their alms.

Mark ix. 41. "Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to CHRIST; verily, (with an oath He assures us) he shall not lose his reward." This should always, if possible, be our intention:—This *poor, oppressed*, this *miserable* man, belongs to CHRIST. This would wonderfully enhance the value of our good deeds before GOD. Mercy is a natural debt, not left to our discretion. He that stands in need of our help, is to have it. Inclination, friendship, vain generosity, are selfish motives. The last refuge of a sinner is alms; it is an art of turning our master's goods innocently to our own advantage. *and making to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness;* heaven being the patrimony and inheritance of the poor, by our alms we engage them to solicit the mercy of GOD for us. This is the only way to sanctify riches, which are almost always either the *fruit*, or the *seed*, of unrighteousness and injustice. And indeed we are more obliged to the poor than they to us. *Earthly riches* are almost always abused without an extraordinary grace.

Luke xviii. 12. "I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess." Be very careful not to be puffed up with the thoughts of your alms. *I give tithes of all that I possess*, was the effect of a pride more prejudicial than the sins of a publican. It is a stratagem of the devil to set before us a sight of

our own good works, and to deprive us of that humility which alone can render us acceptable to God.

Luke xxi. 3. "And Jesus said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all. For all these of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God, but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had." God judges not by the greatness of the gift, but by the heart that offers it. The applause which the great gifts of the rich receive, the complacency they take in them, and the little religion wherewith they are too often companied, lessen them in the sight of God. The rich indeed may give *much*, and reserve *much* for themselves. The poor, who gives all, reserves nothing to himself, but *faith* in God's providence. God magnifies the power of His grace, in disengaging a soul from the love of riches: O my God! manifest this power upon me: Raise my soul above the fears of poverty, and let me have the greatest part of my treasure in heaven. Shut my heart, O Jesus, against the love of worldly riches.

Rom. xv. 25. "But now I go to Jerusalem, to minister (that is, to carry alms) unto the saints." So great an Apostle is not at all afraid that he should debase his character in carrying of alms. A Christian, who considers all other Christians as one body in Jesus Christ, will cheerfully contribute even to the necessities of the greatest, remotest strangers. God often spares the rich for the sake of the poor. To the poor, therefore, the rich stand indebted. A rich man, if a good man, is more afraid of not finding fit persons to receive his alms, than a poor man is of not finding persons to bestow alms upon him. We honour Jesus Christ in His poor, when we treat them kindly and help them. The very best of men are only instruments in God's hands, to receive and to give what God bestows upon them. And this they should do without any desire of glory, or self-interest. Let us make light of money and riches, and send before us into the heavenly treasures, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt; where neither tyrants nor thieves can take it from us; but where it will be kept to our eternal advantage, under

the custody of God Himself[1]. Thou, O Lord, hast been all mercy to me; grant that I may be all mercy to others for Thy sake.

Upon giving of Alms.

Not unto me, but unto Thee, O God, be the thanks, and praise, and glory.

TITHES.

1 Cor. ix. 14. "So hath the Lord (viz. Jesus Christ[2]) ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel." That is, out of the labours and revenues of those to whom they preach the Gospel. And this (upon principles of justice, as well as of religion: if thou hast much, give plenteously) as God has prospered you; that is, proportionably to your incomes. This no human law can set aside. There is a great deal of difference betwixt being exempt by law, and exempt in conscience. O Lord, who hast graciously allowed us a recompence for our labours, make me a faithful steward of that part of Thy revenues committed to my charge, that I may give Thy servants their portion of meat in due season; and that I may not feed myself or family with that which belongs to Thy poor. But, above all, I pray God give me grace to *preach* the Gospel as well as live of it; and that when my Lord cometh, He may find me so doing.—*Amen.* By what right can those, who do nothing at all, claim a share of those tithes which are by Jesus Christ appointed for the propagation of the Gospel?—To satisfy avarice, ambition, luxury, or pleasures, with these, is no better than sacrilege[3].

Numb. xviii. 26. "When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes, which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave-offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe."

[1] Lactantius. [2] Matt. x. 10.

[3] *Can. Apost.* Omnium negotiorum ecclesiasticorum episcopus habeat, et ea, velut Deo contemplante, dispenset.

Deut. xviii. 2. "The LORD (that is, that which GOD hath reserved unto Himself) is their inheritance." This is said to show, that the priests had as good a right to the tithes and offerings as any of the other tribes had to their land, they being both the gift of GOD.

Deut. xxvi. 12. "When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase, the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled;

13. "Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy GOD, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all Thy commandments."

15. "Look down from Thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Thy people Israel." What care is here taken, that men shall not confound the things that belong to GOD with those that they may lawfully convert to their own use; and indeed a great deal more depends on this, than men are aware of, or are willing to believe.

Matt. x. 10. "The workman is worthy of his meat." This is a matter of justice as well as of divine right; but then observe, it is only he that *labours*, not he that is idle, who has a right to the revenues of the Church. Men that are liberal, even to profuseness, to the ministers of their pleasures, that think nothing too much which is laid out upon the body, upon trifles and vanity, will yet grudge him that has the care of their souls, and who stands accountable for them, a very small part of their incomes. After all, it is GOD who maintains his own ministers, and not the people; He who gives all having reserved to His own disposal a part of every man's estate, labour, &c.

Prov. iii. 9, 10. "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the first-fruits (the best) of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty."

Ezek. xliv. 30. "And the first of the first-fruits of all things,

&c., ye shall give unto the priest, that he may cause the blessing to rest in thine house."

Mal. iii. 10. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Gal. vi. 6. "Let him (that is, he is bound by his Christianity) that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things." May my gracious GOD, who has blessed me with wealth, may He bless me with humility and gratitude, and with a perseverance in the most lovely grace of charity. When GOD left out the tribe of Levi in the division of the land, He did it for his advantage: for He gave him a tenth instead of a twelfth part; and even this under such conditions as freed him from bodily labour. Every one is bound to help the poor, not just as he is assessed by human laws, but according to his ability, as GOD has prospered him; and if he will do no more than he can be compelled by law, he will have but a bad account to make. *Prescriptions* are therefore unlawful.

ALMS.

Ecclus. vii. 9. "Say not, GOD will look upon the multitude of my oblations, (that is, if we wilfully break His laws,) and when I offer to the Most High GOD, He will accept it." GOD has no need of our help to relieve the poor. He commands us for our own profit to help one another; that we help the poor with our riches, they us with their prayers. We give nothing to the poor but what we have received from GOD. How well is a man paid for his alms, when they obtain for him the grace of GOD, not to mention a reward in temporal blessings! The administering of charity not only supplieth the wants of the poor, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto GOD, and by their prayers for you[1].

[1] 2 Cor. ix. 12.

1 Tim. v. 8. "But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, (kindred,) he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." A very terrible sentence! And will not this awaken *pastors, masters, parents,* now fast asleep in a deplorable neglect of those who stand related to them, both as to temporals and spirituals? We rob the poor, when we leave to others the care of maintaining our poor relations, when we ourselves are able to do it; and thereby deprive those charitable persons of the means of supporting other poor persons. Remember to give to those that are ashamed to ask; and do not forget your poor relations, lest you be worse than an infidel.

John xii. 6. "This Judas said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare (the money) which was put therein." Our Lord trusts a thief with the little money that He had for His own, or his disciples' necessities, and for the poor, because He values it not much. My Saviour, Thou who hast entrusted me with the revenues of Thy poor, make me a faithful steward; let me not be proud of the trust, since Judas himself had once the same office; but let me dread being unfaithful, lest I draw upon me his cursed fate and end! They who are united in an expectation of an eternal reward, ought to have very little regard to those external advantages which distinguish men. We ought to look upon it as a certain truth, that it is God who sends to us His friends in the persons of the poor and strangers.

Ecclus. xxxv. 9. "In all thy gifts show a cheerful countenance, and dedicate thy tithes with gladness." Give unto the Most High according as He hath enriched thee. For the Lord thy God recompenseth, and will give thee seven times as much. But do not think to corrupt (viz. God) with gifts, nor trust to unrighteous sacrifices, for the Lord is Judge.

Rom. xii. 18. "He that showeth mercy, let him do it with cheerfulness." The good Lord preserve me from vanity, and from seeking applause for my charity.

N. B. To lend is sometimes better than to give, because it flatters not our vanity; it puts not the receiver to the blush,

and gives not encouragement to idleness and sloth. JESUS CHRIST has left the poor in His place, and has in them continual wants and necessities to be supplied. There is danger in letting our thoughts run too much upon the good we do, lest we should at last come to fancy that GOD is in our debt; and that He should reward us in this life. The merits of the poor is not to be the rule of our charity. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in." GOD Himself maketh his sun to shine upon the evil and upon the good. We should always have enough for the poor, if we would but moderate our vanity, and live according to the spirit of the Gospel. It will one day be found true, that the measure of the riches which any man possesseth, should have been the measure of his charity.

Ecclus. xl. 24. "Brethren and help are against the time of trouble; but alms delivereth more than them both."

Tobit xiv. 10. "Manasses gave alms, and escaped the snares of death which they had set for him." He who gives to receive glory of men, is as great, but worse beggar than any he gives to. Send Thy blessing upon my labours and my substance, and continue to me a willing mind to help such as have need according to my ability.

Ecclus. xviii. 15, 16, 17. "My son, blemish not thy good deeds, neither use uncomfortable words when thou givest any thing. Shall not the dew assuage the heat? so is a word better than a gift. A word is better than a gift; but both are with a gracious man."

Prov. xi. 24. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth: and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." Whenever we relieve the wants of the body, we ought not to forget the necessities of the soul. Good advice, and devout petitions, for their eternal welfare, will then be most proper and acceptable to GOD. O GOD, who knowest the necessities of all Thy creatures, give Thy poor the spiritual graces they stand in need of. LORD JESUS, conduct this poor blind person in the way of light and peace everlasting. Support Thy poor members, O JESU, under all their difficulties, and sanctify

their bodily wants to the salvation of their souls. May Thy poor, O LORD, engage Thee, by a life of resignation and piety, to make them amends in the next world for what they want in this. Let Thy poor have a particular share of Thy grace and mercy, that they may appear for me at the day of judgment. Let these poor people have Thy grace, whatever else Thou deniest them. May the wants of Thy poor here, help to increase their happiness hereafter. LORD, grant, that these may bear their poor estate with patience and resignation, and that we may one day meet in the paradise of GOD.

Matt. x. 8. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Give me, O my LORD and Benefactor, an abhorrence of making a trade of Thy gifts, of which I am only a dispenser.

Prov. xiv. 31. xvii. 5. "He that mocketh, and he that oppresseth, the poor, reproacheth his MAKER." As if he did not order what is best for all His creatures. May this Thy poor member, O LORD, make a Christian use of this condition in which Thy providence hath placed him. JESUS CHRIST is continually humbled in His members; some are poor, in prison, sick, naked, hungry, &c. Let me, O LORD, see and help Thee in all these objects. A man that has faith will be glad to discharge himself of the burthen (some part at least) of temporal goods, in order to secure those that are eternal; and to be in some sense the preserver of his brethren. Charity treats the most unknown and remote like brethren, as being children of the same Heavenly FATHER, and members of the same body.

Conversation.

Col. iv. 6. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." One mild, prudent, and edifying conversation, has often gained more souls than many sermons.

1 Thess. v. 11. "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another." These are two express duties of Christian conversation. May that good SPIRIT, which appeared in the likeness of tongues of fire, warm my heart, direct my thoughts, and guide my tongue, and give a power to persuade;

that by my conversation and example, as well as by my sermons and writings, I may promote the kingdom and interests of my great Master. *Amen.*

Psalm cxix. "I will speak of Thy testimonies even before kings, and will not be ashamed." We, of all men, should desire to talk, and to be talked to, in our own way, and of things relating to our own profession; and so we should if our profession were most at our heart.

Matth. x. 16. "Behold I send you forth as sheep among wolves." My SAVIOUR, give me grace to oppose nothing to the violence of men, but the meekness and simplicity of that creature.

Matth. x. 20. "It is not ye that speak, but the HOLY SPIRIT speaketh in you." O HOLY SPIRIT, speak in me on all occasions, that I may always speak as a Christian.

Matth. x. 19. "It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak." Let no incredulity, O JESUS, hinder the effects of so positive a promise, that neither want of talents, nor any other defect or surprise, may hurt Thy cause.

John xv. 20. "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than the LORD. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." O Thou great Master of humility and of suffering, how unwilling are we to follow this maxim, and imitate Thy conduct! O let me learn from Thee never to murmur, never to complain. I can never suffer any thing but what Thou hast suffered.

Mark iv. 38. "Carest Thou not that we perish?" LORD, give me always a great concern for the Church, a true compassion for its evils, and a sure confidence in Thee. O LORD JESUS, Thou seest our afflictions, our troubles, and our wants. Haste Thee to help us, O LORD GOD of our salvation.

Prayer before Study.

O GOD, the fountain of all wisdom, in a deep sense of my own ignorance, and of that great charge which lies upon me, I am constrained to come often before Thee, from whom I have

learned whatever I know, to ask that help without which I shall disquiet myself in vain. Most humbly beseeching Thee to guide me with Thine eye; to enlighten my mind, that I may see myself, and teach others the wonders of Thy law; that I may learn from Thee what I ought to think and speak concerning Thee. Direct and bless all the labours of my mind; give me a discerning spirit, a sound judgment, and an honest and religious heart. And grant that, in all my studies, my *first* aim may be to set forth Thy glory, and so set forward the salvation of mankind; that I may give a comfortable account of my time at the great day, when all our labours shall be tried.

And if Thou art pleased that by *my ministry* sinners shall be converted, and Thy kingdom enlarged, give me the grace of *humility*, that I may never ascribe the success to myself, but to Thy Holy Spirit, which enables me to will and to do according to Thy good pleasure. Grant this, O Father of all light and truth, for the sake of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Sufferings.

Luke ii. 35. "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also." Thus God treated Mary, and thus He treats those whom He loves; He mingles bitters with their sweets. He who is called to the ministry of the word, is called to suffer the contradiction of the world, and, if occasion be, to seal the truth with his blood. This should always be our support and comfort, that the tongues, the ill-will, the evil designs of men, are always subject to the power of God; let us therefore be intent upon our duty, and leave the rest to God, who continually watches over His faithful servants. *Even the hairs of your head are all numbered.* My God! settle in my heart a firm belief in Thy providence, and dependence upon Thy will and designs, that I may consider nothing but my duty, and fear no evil; but only lest I should not faithfully discharge my duty in all respects.

Acts ix. 29. "He preached boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus: but they went about to kill him." When a man is treated as Jesus Christ was for preaching, it is a good sign that

he preaches by his Spirit, and that this is the beginning of his reward: and indeed opposition, and evil treatment, are less to be feared by a minister of CHRIST, than applause and condemnation. *Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you!*

2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." Observe here an apostolical disposition in the midst of persecution:—Liberty of spirit and joy of heart; an invincible courage; a lively belief of the care of GOD; a full trust in his assistance in the lowest abyss of trouble; casting the eyes of faith upon the sufferings of the LORD JESUS; counting himself happy in fulfilling them in his mystical body.

Phil. i. 12. "The things which happened unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel." He who loses courage under oppositions, is even yet a stranger to the ways of the Gospel. GOD can and does make his greatest enemies contribute to his work and glory. Let us leave GOD to act, and follow his guidance.

2 Tim. iv. 17. "Notwithstanding, the LORD stood with me, and strengthened me." The more a minister of CHRIST is forsaken by men, the more conformable he is to CHRIST, and the greater consolation he may expect from GOD.

Heb. xii. 3. "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." If the world, which rose up against CHRIST, suffer us to be quiet, we should have reason to fear that we do not follow his steps, and that the world is pleased with us.

Heb. xii. 6. "Whom the LORD loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." If nature were innocent, a Father so just and so good would not impose a condition so hard upon his children, were it not necessary to our salvation. We are treated as bastards, if we are not chastened, but left to our own libertinism; too sure a sign of reprobation. Grant, O LORD, that I may submit to, and even be pleased with, those temporal evils which lead to eternal happiness.

1 Pet. ii. 29. "This is thankworthy, if a man for conscience

towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." He who can be content to have God for a witness of his patience and sufferings, has found the secret to make God his friend. We complain of unjust sufferings, and they are the things which we ought most to value. A Christian, whose whole care is to avoid sufferings, has forgot his pattern; and that we are Christians in order to be crucified with Christ. We see in Jesus Christ innocence and holiness itself suffering; and yet we complain of hardships. The meekness of Christ, when in the hands of his enemies, and when he had power to have delivered himself, is what we are always to remember.

1 Pet. iii. 14. "If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror." It is plain we do not know the happiness of suffering, when we speak of it with abhorrence, and shun it with all our might. Nothing but thy love, O Lord, can suppress in our hearts the fear of men.

1 Pet. iv. 14. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye: for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." No worldly glory equals this; nothing causes his Spirit to rest upon us more perseveringly; God will not account of sufferings brought upon a man's self by his own fault; and yet Christian grace can sanctify even such crimes, when a criminal suffers in the spirit of repentance, and submission to the will of God. To be purified by afflictions is a great mercy; to be abandoned to prosperity till death, is an instance of God's anger.

1 Pet. iv. 19. "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

1 John iii. 13. "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." Let us rather fear that we do not belong to God, if the world spare us.

2 Cor. i. 7. "As ye are partakers of the sufferings; so shall ye be also of the consolations." O Lord, remove from me all inward disquiet, and grant that, with an entire submission to Thy will, I may ever preserve a peace of mind, and leave my deliverance to Thy choice. The more the world deprives us of its protection for our adherence to God, the more He espouseth our

interest, and declares on our side. It is the part of the minister of CHRIST to labour without ceasing,—to suffer without resentment,—and to leave his cause in the hands of GOD, with full trust in Him.

A Thanksgiving for St. Peter's Day, *when my Father and two of my Brothers most wonderfully escaped being drowned.*

O eternal and most merciful GOD, who hast made us happy in the knowledge of Thy providence, which governs and preserves all things both in heaven and earth; by whose goodness *my father and two of my brothers were, as on this day, delivered from sudden and untimely deaths:* accept of my hearty thanks and praise for this great mercy vouchsafed to the whole family; and grant that none of us may, while we live, forget these wonderful expressions of Thy loving kindness *to us,* the most undeserving of all Thy people.

We had sinned many ways against Thee, O LORD, and this was a loud, a distinct, and merciful call of thine, to every one of us, to repentance, which I most humbly beseech Thee give us grace to hear, to remember, and obey.

The greatest happiness, O merciful Father, which I can desire, either for myself or those who were sharers in this great deliverance, is what I now humbly beg for; that we may all of us gratefully acknowledge Thy great love for us; meditate on Thy tender mercies; magnify Thy great and good providence; and by these mighty favours, be reduced to an obedience becoming our redemption.

Pass by and pardon the ingratitude we have any of us been guilty of; and give us grace to consider, that by the merciful goodness of GOD, we are delivered from a world of dangers, which would otherwise overwhelm us.

And according to Thy wonted mercies, preserve us, for the time to come, to serve Thee. May the same watchful Providence, which has before time defended us from such imminent dangers, guard us, the remainder of our days, through all the changes and

chances of this mortal life. This I most humbly beseech Thee to grant, for Thy own goodness' sake, and for the merits of our Saviour CHRIST JESUS. *Amen.*

Praise the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me praise His holy name.

Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who saved thy life from destruction.

LORD, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him; or the sons of men, that Thou so regardest them?

But what is my father's house, that Thou shouldest have such respect to so poor, so sinful a cottage?

I am oppressed with the load of mercies which we have received from Thee.

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2 Pet. iv. 10. "As every man has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as stewards of the manifold grace of GOD." We have received them freely, not for ourselves, but for others; no man is excused; as stewards we are accountable. Every man should be content with his own talents.

OXFORD,
The Feast of St. Peter.

[NEW EDITION.]

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

SUPPLEMENT TO TRACT XVIII.

ON THE BENEFITS OF THE SYSTEM OF FASTING PRESCRIBED BY OUR CHURCH.

THE following observations were occasioned by some questions, signed "Clericus," addressed to the Editor of the British Magazine, in April last; as they related to my tract, I felt called upon to answer them as far as I could; and they are now re-printed, with some additions, in the hope that they may remove some difficulties, which stand in the way of returning to the wise Rules of our Church, with respect to the Christian duty of Fasting.

E. B. P.

OXFORD,
The Feast of St. James.

I. *Wednesday Fast.* I did not mean to imply that this was a fast of *our* church. In p. 6, I meant to speak of the example set us by the *early* church; in p. 10, "the two-sevenths of the year, which the church has wished to be in some way separated by acts of self-denial and humiliation," include the forty days of Lent, not the Wednesday. Undoubtedly many pious Christians have an especial respect for the Wednesday, as the day on which our SAVIOUR is supposed to have been betrayed, and also because their church has, in consequence, hallowed it by the use of the Litany. It would be natural for any Christian, who would add

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occasional *private* fasts, to select the Wednesday: and this it were well to bear in mind, for the church prescribes what is generally necessary only; those who strive at higher degrees of holiness, and are constantly stretching forward, will, *when accustomed to them*, practise themselves in private acts of self-denial at other times.

II. *Does a feast ordinarily supersede a fast, or how is the fast to be engrafted upon the feast?* Our church, in that she has made one exception, (viz. that her weekly Friday fast is to give way to the birth-day of her Lord,) and one only, seems to me to imply, that on all other occasions the fast is to be retained. Yet this does not supersede the feast[1]. The glad remembrance on each such feast-day still remains,—whether that God then crowned with exceeding glory the labours and patience of His blessed servants, the Apostles, or whether it were some act of mercy conveyed to us directly in His Son. The act of fasting (when the habit is acquired) chastens, but diminishes not our joy; nay, on the festivals of the blessed Apostles, it carries on the lesson of the vigil, and teaches us how we must "enter into His rest." This, then, seems to me to answer the third question, *Are the vigils to be kept as fasts, in such cases, as well as the day itself?* I should answer, yes; because the vigil, or fast, of the preceding evening, is intended to prepare the soul, by previous abstinence and meditation, that it may rise disposed, and refreshed, and unencumbered, ready to receive God's holy influences on the morrow, and this ground is even increased by the additional solemnity of that morrow. There appears, however, to be this difference between the vigil and the Friday, or the Lent fast,—that in the vigil, not humiliation, but preparation for a solemn service, is the main object, the fasting is incidental only; as indeed the very name leads one to think of the *watching* and previous meditation, not of the abstinence, except as far as it facilitates this end.

[1] Bingham mentions that the 51st Canon of the Council of Laodicea forbad the celebration of the birth-days of martyrs, i. e. the days of their martyrdom (and so saints'-day) during Lent: they were to be transferred to the Saturday or Sunday. This, however, has not been adopted by our church.

IV. *Rogation days; or, the three days preceding our Lord's ascension.* This, according to Bingham, is a Western fast, unknown in the East, where the whole period of Pentecost was one season of joy. This fast appears to have been a sort of extended vigil, preparatory to the day "when the Bridegroom was taken away," and teaching us that, laying aside our worldly appetites, we should "in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell." "Doubtless," says Cæsarius [1], bishop of Arles, "he loves the wounds of his sins, who does not, during these three days, seek for himself spiritual medicines, by fasting, prayer, and psalmody." The council of Orleans, A.D. 511, ordained that they should be kept after the manner of Lent. There is something salutary both in the eastern and the western view; in most periods, however, of church history, the earnestness and distrust of self implied by this preparation for the festival of the Ascension is more fitted and more salutary for us than the unbroken exulting joyousness of the eastern church.

V. *Should the observance of the church's fasts be public? and if so, how should it be regulated?* Undoubtedly we are not to fast, any more than to pray, or give alms, "to be seen of men:" but as no one has ever interpreted our SAVIOUR's warning as forbidding public or Common Prayer, so neither can it apply to public or common fasting. If we do publicly only what the church requires, there is no more boastfulness in so doing than in going publicly to church. "In the season of the Passion," says Tertullian [2], "when the religious observance of fasting is universal and in a manner public, we scruple not to lay aside the kiss of charity, (this omission was the public avowal that a person was fasting,) not caring to conceal an observance which all are sharing with us." But further, since fasting is to be accompanied by *retirement*, all that the world need know is, that we *do* fast; the *degree* of self-denial need be, for the most part, known

[1] Ap. Augustin. t. v. p. 299, App. ed. Bened. Serm. 174, alias de tempore 173, quoted by Bingham, book 13, c. i. sec. 10, as Augustine's.

[2] Sic et die Paschæ, quo communis et quasi publica jejunii religio est, merito deponimus osculum, nihil curantes de occultando quod cum omnibus facimus. Tertul. de Orat. c. xiv.

only to God, or to those immediately in one's domestic circle, who, it may be hoped, will share our feelings and our practice, and with whom there is no parade. We are not to obtrude our practice on others, but neither (as Clericus well objects) dare we deny it, if discovered, any more than we should deny that we were walking to church, although it should be on some holy day which the world has disused. Nay, this very denial proceeds (in part, doubtless, from misinterpretation of our Saviour's precept, but in part also) from some sort of feeling that it is a great thing which we are doing. On the other hand, let a person familiarize his mind to the idea that fasting is but a "plain duty, (obedience to the church,)" and he will feel, that to try to mislead persons as to his performance of that duty must needs be wrong, because it is deceitful, but is also wrong, as countenancing evil, and the neglect of duty. It is, undoubtedly, often very painful to speak of, or to avow, any of one's own religious practices, especially when asked in an irreverent spirit,—it seems like profaning the sanctuary of one's own heart ;—yet there is in most minds that instinctive respect for a man's honest conviction, as well as for the simple straight-forwardness, which, when called upon, would cheerfully state the truth, that any unaffected avowal that we thought it our duty to fast, would instantly command respect—often perhaps lead to inquiry. Only, we must beware that we be not inconsistent or forward : a person who should voluntarily go into a mixed or large society, where the very object of meeting was relaxation or amusement, and yet purpose to fast there, would deservedly expose himself to the charge of inconsistency, because he has chosen for his fast a place manifestly unsuited to it, and he must bear the difficulties which he has brought upon himself. On the contrary, should it be convenient to his Diocesan, or Archdeacon, to hold a visitation on one of the church's fasts, (the case proposed by "Clericus,") there would be nothing in the intercourse of a visitation dinner inconsistent with the abstemiousness of a fast-day. Generally speaking, however, retirement and self-collection seem so essential a part of fasting, that, unless on some extraordinary occasion, which might give a decidedly religious character to the

meeting, I should think it best for any one, who would observe the church's fasts, to abstain from all society, except that of his own circle. The Fellows of one of the most respected Colleges in this place have, for years, made it a rule neither to accept nor to give any dinner-invitations on the Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent. This has been a good beginning; and they have been the more respected for making this rule, even by those persons who have not thought it needful to follow their example. Some other persons, though probably but few, have extended their rule to all the fast-days of the church, except on some extraordinary occasions, such as those above hinted, or where respect to persons in authority seemed to supersede their private judgment; on such occasions, they would practise a quiet unostentatious abstemiousness. Nor do I think that any charge of singularity (in any obnoxious sense) does or would attach in any case when a person acts simply and unostentatiously. If a clergyman, e. g., were, in declining the invitation of an elder minister, to assign as his ground, that he did not dine out on fast-days, there would be something unbecoming in this sort of tacit reproof to an older labourer in God's vineyard; but though we must not disguise the truth, if asked for, we need not voluntarily put forward the grounds of our actions; we might leave it to circumstances to lay them open, as far as might be necessary; and if we make no parade of our practice, our Christian liberty will be respected. But, should it be otherwise, we are, of course, not to count that "some strange thing has happened unto us," though our good should be evil spoken of. After all our precautions against ostentatiousness, censure of others, and the like, our very practice, if accounted of any moment, will probably be regarded as implying blame of those who allow themselves in the things from which we think it *our* duty to abstain; especially shall we have much difficulty in the first outset, but from within, more than from without. We all, probably, magnify our own importance, and think that our neighbours canvass us more than they do; whereas some passing observation, that "we are good sort of people, but have exaggerated notions about the church's authority," or that "our state of health or spirits leads us to

excited notions about fasting," or that "we have new-fangled notions about Christian antiquity," or, perchance, that "we are half papists in this, though sound in other respects," and the like, and so we are dismissed. Meanwhile, with a little patience, and a few years, (if God allots them to us), our new-fangled notions will have become old; it will be seen, that in proportion as we love the old Catholic Christianity, we must hate the modern corruptions of it in popery; and, if we do not influence those older than ourselves, (which we should not even expect to do, since it is not natural, and we, on the contrary, shall constantly have to learn something of almost all our elders,) we shall, in our turn, gradually become older, and shall be able to influence those whom God in His ordinary dealings intends that we should influence—our younger brethren; and that, too, when we shall not only be convinced, on the authority of the church, and of older Christians, that regular prescribed fasting is good, but have known it for ourselves, and shown it forth, by God's grace, in our lives.

VI. *In what is the abstinence of fasting to consist?* On this question I can say no more than I have already said. Persons, constitutions, occupations, states of health, habits of mind, vary so indefinitely, that I do not see how a rule, which must take all these into account, can be general. I do not indeed think it a sufficient answer, which some urge, that fasting, e.g., sours their temper, &c. &c., for it remains to be proved, whether, if undertaken, not as an experiment, but as a duty, not as an isolated act, but as a habit, it would have that effect. Undoubtedly the flesh will rebel at first, as it does against every attempt made to subdue it, but this does not prove that it would not be tranquil and weaned at last. Again, the habit of fasting would naturally be accompanied by some degree of corresponding change in our other habits, which might tend to make it lighter; as of old, when men, e.g., on fast-days, abstained from all unnecessary exercise or fatigue, which might incapacitate the soul from performing its duties aright, unless the body had its usual refreshment. And some such arrangement, I should think, parochial ministers, even with extensive cures, might make, allotting to

the fast-day such portion of their weekly duty as was least exhausting. Yet, after all, one rule will not apply to all, young or old, in strong health or weakly, engaged in active or in sedentary duties, of full or spare habits; as, again, some of the ends of fasting will vary according to the periods of life, habits, or temperaments; and, with the ends, so will the modes also, or degree of fasting. "As fasting hath divers ends," says Bishop Taylor [1], speaking of private fasting, "so has it divers laws." And for the temptation peculiar to youth, he remarks, "a sudden, sharp, and violent fast" will often only aggravate the evil. What is then needed is, "a state of fasting, a diet of fasting, a daily lessening our meat and drink, and a choosing such a course of diet as may make the least preparation for the lusts of the body." This, although belonging directly to private fasts, is so far to our purpose, as indicative of his judgment, that the rules of fasting must be adapted to our several cases; and it was with this view, that, in the second edition of my tract, I alluded (p. 23) to the ξηροφαγία, the less rigid fast of the ancient church, in hopes that those who, from ill health, were unequal to the harder fasts, might yet not think themselves excluded from the privilege of fasting. And if the fast serve no other purpose than to distinguish the day from ordinary days, by "eating no pleasant bread," yet even this degree of fasting, where no other is admissible, can be, and has been, blessed by God. The rules which I would recommend to one commencing the observance of the church's fast would be:—1. To abstain, as far as possible, from all mixed society at meals on those days, both as likely to be inconsistent with the frame of mind, which it is the object of the fast to cherish, and as tempting us (were it but to escape notice) to break our rule. 2. Not to tie himself down to any severe rule at first, as to the degree of fasting; for as our bodies have been inured to ease, so must they gradually be inured to seasonable austerities. If we lay down too strict a rule, it may, in reality, be too much for us at first, and so we may be tempted

[1] Life and Death of the Holy Jesus. Disc. xiii. 5, "On fasting." This discourse is full of valuable practical rules, which are in part repeated in the "Holy Living," c. iv. sec. 5.

to lay aside the whole habit; whereas, had we begun more modestly, we might in time have arrived, with comparative ease, at the higher measures of it. 3. To watch carefully the effects upon our own minds of any failures or inconsistencies in our practice; for these failures, carefully observed, when we have once begun the practice of fasting, will show its real uses, more, perhaps, than the direct benefits of the practice itself. 4. Accompany the fast not only with increased prayer and meditation, but with other little outward acts of self-denial, for thus the whole day will be more in keeping, and the mind taken off from dwelling too much on the one *act* of fasting. Thus the brunt of our enemy's attack will not rest upon this one point, (as is likely to be the case if the fasting stand alone,) but, by being divided, will be weakened. "A man," says Bishop Taylor, "when he mourns in his fast, must not be merry in his sport; weep at dinner, and laugh all day after; have a silence in his kitchen, and music in his chamber; judge the stomach, and feast the other senses." So again Bishop Taylor instances "hard lodging, uneasy garments, *laborious postures of prayer*, journeys on foot, sufferance of cold, paring away the use of ordinary solaces, denying every pleasant appetite, rejecting the most pleasant morsels, as being in the rank of 'bodily exercises,' which, though, as St. Paul says, of themselves they 'profit little,' yet they accustom us to acts of self-denial in inferior instances, and are not useless to the designs of mortifying carnal and sensual lusts." A person would never have selected these instances without having tried them himself, and found their use; and, on the other hand, most persons, probably, who have systematically tried fasting, have experienced the benefits of some of these accessories. Some of these also may be irksome at first, as others would be to many no self-denial at all; but every one knows what, however trifling, would be self-denial to him, and the frequent repetition of these acts is a constant, though gentle, self-discipline. It seems to me part of the foolish wisdom of the day, and its ignorance of our nature, to despise these 'small things,' and to disguise its impatience of restraint under some such general maxim as, that "God, has no pleasure in self-torture, or mortification,"—"God wills to

see his creatures happy," and the like: undoubtedly God wills not our death, but our life; not our misery, but our peace; but God often restores our bodily health by bitter herbs, the knife or cautery, and why not our spiritual? Our forefathers knew better, and by disciplining themselves in these little things, attained to greater; they knew that religion is concerned about little things, as well as great; that if we look to great occasions or great instances only, we shall form no habit; and therefore they shrunk not from mentioning all the little instances, if they were only (the case of an aged and pious relative of my own, long since with the Lord,) abstinence from snuff during Lent, or abridging self-indulgence as to morning sleep, which they had found useful to them. 5. Take especial care to practise self-denial as to food at other times also, lest the fast degenerate into a mere *opus operatum*, a thing good in and for itself, even if followed by acts of an opposite kind. In Bishop Taylor's words, "Let not intemperance (or self-indulgence) be the prologue or the epilogue to your fast. When the fast is done, eat temperately according to the proportion of other meals, lest gluttony keep either of the gates to abstinence." The importance of this caution will probably be felt by those who have tried to fast; or it may be seen in the corruptions of the Romish Church. 6. Let young ministers, or those who hope to be ordained to the ministry, beware lest they be led, by the novelty of this duty, to overvalue it, or to undervalue those who have lived in times when it was not systematically practised. Obedience to a parent is a higher duty than fasting: "God will have mercy, and not sacrifice." If, therefore, a parent object to any particular mode of fasting, let it be laid aside for the time, and let the individual exercise himself in self-denial in this also, that he relinquishes what a parent objects to, while he looks out for himself other modes to which his parent would not object[1]. 7. Omit trying no act of self-denial in little things, which,

[1] In like manner, let him not bind himself so to a particular rule as to preclude any real act of charity or kindness to others; but rather let him choose some time for his own ends of retirement, &c., which may be less convenient to himself, i. e. let his rule be a restraint to himself, not a hindrance to benevolence or an occasion of churlishness.

without your own thought, suggest themselves to you, merely because they are little; such suggestions are generally proved by the result not to have come from ourselves, and, if followed, they lead onward. 8. If one mode of fasting do not suit your health, then, after a time, try another; some persons who could not bear early abstinence, (the loss of a breakfast,) might well endure subsequent privation, such as eating a sparing meal early, as the last in the day, or they might at least decidedly abridge their principal meal, or, again, they might be able to strike off all luxury in their food. 9. Supposing all these attempts to fail, after having been fairly tried, yet a person might keep up the spirit of fasting, by such accessories as those instanced, (No. 4,) and might multiply these in proportion as he is obliged to abandon the other, that so he may be ready to avail himself of his ability to fast, whenever God shall restore it to him. A person of weak health is constantly tempted to self-indulgence in matters which do not concern his health, *e. g.* indolent postures, taking food at the first moment of craving, &c. &c.; and thus he may exercise real self-discipline, even if physicians pronounce him incapable of fasting without impairing his ability to do his duty where God has placed him. Let any one consider what is the boast of our country—our *comforts;* and he will see what a tendency these have to make him forget his heavenly country, and that he is but a pilgrim,—to make him think it "good for him to be here." How much may he abridge, and yet, by his self-denial, only not be more disadvantageously situated than others. Or, to take another view, does not this show us how many occasions of self-discipline we are furnished with more than our neighbours, from our very national character and circumstances, and that a person need be at no loss for instances of self-government if he but look for them? 10. If a person acquire the habit, let him recollect how slowly he arrived at the conviction of its necessity, and not be surprised that others are as slow, or appear yet more so; perhaps, without fasting, they are more self-denying than one's self with it. "Let it be done," says Bishop Taylor, "just as a man takes physic, of which no man hath reason to be proud, and no man thinks it necessary but because he is in sickness, or

in danger and disposition to it." 11. Especially let any one recollect how much, which is humiliating in his youth, (even if God saved him from open sin,) might have been prevented by the habit of fasting, if he had then practised it; let him bear this in mind, when he fasts, and make his fast an act of humiliation for his own particular sins, as well as a discipline, so can he never be proud of his fasting.

I will only add, that fasting has by no means so many difficulties as Satan would persuade men, for fear they should try it. Even among the poorer, some act of self-denial as to the pleasures of sense might easily be practised, (1 Cor. vii. 5, might be hinted at;) and to instance one case only:—A poor woman mentioned, with much respect, her father's practice never to taste food before receiving the Lord's Supper; (adhering unconsciously to the practice of the universal Church in its better days, and indeed of our own in Bishop Taylor's time;) she added, "I never heard that his bodily health suffered from it." With regard to the rich, (who are obviously called upon to fast in greater degrees,) I have the authority of an eminent physician, whom I well know not to be wedded to any particular theory of medicine, that, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the degree of fasting recommended in my tract would not only not be injurious, but be beneficial. He added, "Fasting is like the Sabbath—healthy to the body as well as to the soul."

VII. *Is there any difference between abstinence and fasting?* Not, I imagine, in our Church, although she retained the terms which were used to denote different degrees of abstinence in the Romish; and this I infer from her nowhere saying which are days of fasting, and which of abstinence, whereas the Romish Church does distinguish them; further, as Wheatley remarks, they are called in the second title (where they are enumerated), "days of fasting *or* abstinence." As in other cases, our Church seems to have used both terms, in order to show that she therein comprehended, without distinction, all to which these several names had been given.

VIII. *Vigils.* There appears to have been no difference between the regulations of these and other fasting-days. Whether

the old vigil was formally abolished is uncertain: (Card. Bona de Divina Psalmod. c. 4. §. 3. contends that vigils were regulated only, and not abolished, except in a provincial Spanish synod; they were prohibited also in the Council of Cognac, A.D. 1260.) Yet it fell into desuetude, and then the name was transferred to the fast of the preceding *day;* which fast probably existed before the vigil was disused. "Since the saints," says Alcuin[1], "arrived at their present happiness through temporal affliction, we, as we rejoice together with them in their eternal joy, so must we needs suffer with them, that following their steps throughout, we may .... arrive at the same joys. To mark this, on the *days* preceding those of their birth (into the other life), which *days* we call their vigils, eating more sparingly than usual, we devoutly preface those solemnities with the due observance of fasts, and with affliction of the flesh; that, purified by the abstinence of the preceding day, we may the more worthily celebrate the joy of the following festival." Fasting, then, seems to have been a primary part of the solemnity,—to remind Christians, namely, in their days of ease, how "through much tribulation we must

[1] De Divinis Officiis, §. 18. de Feria Sexta, quoted by Du Cange, Glossar. *v.* Vigilia. In like manner, the "*dies* jejunii," are said by Honorius Augustod. (de Antiquo Ritu Missæ, l. 3. c. 6. quoted ibid.) to have been consecrated instead of the vigils, and to have retained the name of vigils: Belethus (Divin. Offic. Explic. c. 137, referred to l. c.) says "the fast of St. John has a vigil, i. e. the *day* preceding this festival is called a vigil, or in place thereof, a fast," where he gives the usual account of the abolition of the vigils, as does Durand (Rationale, l. 6. c. 7. n. 8. ibid.) but without specifying the time of the fast substituted for it. The preceding day appears to have been a total fast, until after afternoon service, or three o'clock, when a moderate and dry meal was permitted (see some original authorities ap. Coteler. ad Patres Apostol. t. 1. pp. 326, 328). In a canon of the Council of Salegunstadt, A.D. 1022, provision is made that the fast of the vigil of our Lord's nativity should not interfere with the ember fast, (lest so persons might lose the benefit of a fast). Harduin Concil. t. vi. p. 828. Hence it appears that the fast of the vigil extended over the day; for if the fast of the vigil had belonged to the evening, it would not have interfered with that of the ember fast, the more rigid part of which terminated at three o'clock. See also the Capitula of Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, ib. t. iii. p. 1774, and the Council of Mechlin, A.D. 1570, ib. t. x. p. 1188.

enter into the kingdom of God," and that the "good soldiers of Christ must endure hardness,"—not merely as a preparation for the duties of the morrow. Each day had its peculiar subject of meditation and of resolve; the vigil,—the hardships which the Apostles endured in their conflict; the festival—the Christian graces which through this their patient perseverance they realized, and the glory bestowed upon them. Yet even as a mere preparation, the Christian also might do well to remember (blessed are they who know it not) that corpus onustum—animam quoque prægravat una, atque affigit humi *divinæ* particulam *auræ*.

IX. "Clericus" asks, in connexion with this subject, what is to be done, where there is no daily service, as to the prayers appointed for the Ember-week to be used every day? I own, the more I hear or think of this subject, or those connected with it, I am the more convinced that the clergy are wrong in withholding daily prayers, that they underrate the willingness or the wish of their people to go to Church, *if invited.* To mention two or three facts only:—In a small country village of less than 300, where a clergyman was assured that he would have a congregation on Saints'-days, there assembled in winter, (when there was not much work) to prayers only, above fifty persons. In another, where there was service on the Wednesday and Friday in the Ember-week, with a sermon, the congregation was like that of a Sunday, and the people deeply interested. In a manufacturing town, on the eves of Saints'-days, with a sermon, it averaged 1000. A poor person here told a friend of my own incidentally, that her father, when he had no work, went round to see where there was any service. Surely we are neglecting to supply the cravings which either already exist, or might readily be awakened, when man has no earthly friend. And might not our poor, when destitute of employment, be led to the Church instead of to the ale-house? Consider, again, how different would the state of things be, if every Church in our country had but its ten, or eighteen, or fifty worshippers. Would not the holy angels rejoice at such a sight? and might not the evils we dread, perchance, by God's mercy, be averted? Again, how would such simple prayer undermine the world's present maxim, which would make

human agency, and so preaching, every thing! How would it, too, build up those who are real Christians, and so raise the standard of Christianity among us! or how would it support, and comfort, and purify, and initiate into the happiness of their coming life, many who are about to part from this! To return to the Ember-days, besides the direct, incalculable blessing which would result from their observation, do not they furnish an opportunity of inculcating, what in these days is much needed, the claims, the importance, the sanctity of the office of the Christian ministry and of the Church, without the appearance of extolling one's self or one's office because it is one's own?

E. B. P.

P. S. Some space being left, it may not be amiss to say a few words on some of the prevailing prejudices against fasting.

There is no explicit command to fast in the New Testament. Persons are but little aware how far this argument will go. Any one will find, if he examine, still less proof that he should receive the Communion of his Lord's Body and Blood, still less direct proof that he shall go to Church on the Lord's day, that he may have his infant children ingrafted into Christ, that there is any especial object in morning and evening prayer, that he should read the Scriptures daily, and in fact for almost every practice, which every person who cares about his soul, knows to be needful for him. I omit others, because some might be glad of an excuse for abandoning them also. Now what is the direction about the Lord's Supper? Our Saviour says, "This do, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me." And of fasting He says, "*When ye fast*, be not as the hypocrites:" in both cases, it is implied that the observance shall be followed, and in both, directions are given concerning how it is to be observed: in the one case, "not as the hypocrites," in the other, "in remembrance of me." I do not mean that there is not satisfactory proof, that Christ has given His body and blood to be our spiritual food and sustenance, or not full and condemning evidence, *by way of inference*, that whoso does not "eat the flesh of Christ and drink His blood," in His Supper, "has no life in Him;"

but the objection made against the necessity of fasting is drawn from the absence of any *explicit* direction to fast habitually; let men observe then, that on the same ground they should doubt whether they should habitually receive the Lord's Supper. Nay, the direct evidence is perhaps the stronger in behalf of fasting: for in answer to the objection "The disciples of John fast *oft*, but thine eat and drink:" our Saviour replies, "when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, then shall they fast in those days." (Luke v. 34, 35.) Does not this then imply that the only difference between John's disciples and our Saviour's in this respect, was, that the Apostles had their Saviour still in the body, present with them; but that afterwards they *should* fast *as* John's disciples did? and when we find that they did so fast, what farther commentary on our Saviour's words do we want? and if we fast not, are we acting, as He said His disciples would? or if we make a spiritual fast, why do we not adopt spiritual sacraments, *i. e.* none at all? If, again, we have indications of frequent communions in the New Testament, so have we of "fastings often:" if we trace up the practice of the early Church in the sacraments to the inspired writings, and so obtain the sanction of God's word for the early practice, why not in the use of fasting, which is equally clear? why not, except that the one is an obvious privilege and costs us nothing, while fasting, though a privilege, is at first painful, and so we shut our eyes and refuse to see?

"Fasting," we are told, "is a legal observance, which may be useful at a certain stage of religious progress, for an infantine state in individuals or in the church; but is unfit for an advanced state, such (it is implied) as we are in." It is remarkable that the same persons, who at one time objected to fasting, as not resting on a positive law, should next complain of it as legal. It might suffice to answer, Why then did our Saviour fast? or, rather, (for we dare not speculate on things too high for us,) since it was part of His Father's will that He should fast, must it not be needful for us? and may not *one* object of His fasting have been to leave an example to us, (as nothing, which He did, can be without its meaning to us,) and just to show us that fasting is a spiritual action, and belongs also to a high spiritual

state? For His fasting was not required to fulfil the law, since fasting formed no part of the law, and was engrafted upon it by the prophets, or spiritual men among the Jews, as a part of self-discipline, and so was an evangelical portion of the old dispensation. And, as matter of history, who, among Christians, have fasted most rigidly? Uniformly, the most spiritual; and they, increasingly, as they went on heavenwards.

And to what else can one attribute it, that so many eminent men in the French Church, amid all the disadvantages of a corrupt religion, attained a degree of spirituality rare among ourselves.

"*Fasting is Popish.*" If this means, that it has been preserved amid the errors of Romanism, is not this true of most of the truths of the Gospel? Our charge against the Romanists, generally, is not that they have not preserved the truth, but that, like the Pharisees, "they have made it of none effect by their traditions;" at least, in great measure, to so many of their members. And does not the objection imply that we have forgotten the peculiar character of our church, which is not a mere Protestant, but a Primitive Church? And if we are to prevail in our approaching conflict with Romanism, or to be (as we seem marked out to be) a means of reclaiming that Church, must we not reconsider the character of our own Church, and take our stand in its principles, not in the protestantism of other churches, or of the day?

OXFORD,
Passion-Week.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

RECORDS OF THE CHURCH.

No. XIX.

THE HOLY CHURCH THROUGHOUT ALL THE WORLD DOTH ACKNOWLEDGE THEE.

St. Cyprian on the Unity of the Church.

St. Cyprian was Bishop of Carthage, and was martyred in the Valerian persecution, A.D. 258. His authority stands very high in the Church, from his early date, and from the force and magnanimity of his character. He was originally a teacher of rhetoric, and was converted to Christianity by one Cæcilius, a priest, whose name he afterwards assumed. From the time he was a Catechumen, (*i. e.* a candidate for baptism,) he devoted himself to the stricter form of Christian obedience, believing that in this way he should best arrive at the knowledge of divine truth; according to the text (John vii. 17.) "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine," &c. Soon after he was baptized he sold his goods to assist the poor. He was afterwards ordained Priest; and, on the death of the Bishop of Carthage, elected in his place. During the Decian persecution, he was clamorously demanded by the populace at the heathen shows, to be thrown to the wild beasts, and in consequence retired from Carthage to a place of safety, where he remained till the fury of the enemies of Christ abated. Some years afterwards the persecution was renewed under the emperor Valerian, when he was banished, by the Roman governor, to a city at some distance from Carthage. Here he remained eleven months, and at the end of this time was arrested by his persecutors, and beheaded in the neighbourhood of his see, on September 14, A.D. 258.

His treatise on the Unity of the Church is especially valuable, as showing the clear and complete view taken by Christians at

that early period, of the doctrine of the One Holy Catholic Church, as confessed in the Creed, and maintained by the Church of England, in her Prayer Book and by her great Divines, at this day. It seems to have been written in consequence of a noted religious disturbance of the day, called the Novatian Schism.

1.

Heresy and Schism are snares of the Devil.

"Forasmuch as our LORD has given us these words of admonition, 'Ye are the salt of the earth,' and commands us not only to maintain an innocent simplicity of character, but to be prudent as well as simple; ought we not, therefore, my beloved brethren, to keep ourselves ever on the watch, and by anxious and active vigilance to detect and disarm the treachery of our spiritual foe? Let not us, who in CHRIST have been clothed with wisdom from GOD the FATHER, yet prove ourselves to lack wisdom for the protection of our eternal interests. The servants of GOD have other species of hostility to fear, besides that which would overthrow them by direct opposition, and undisguised assaults. It is easy to be cautious if the danger is before our eyes; for when the foe declares himself, the mind is forearmed for the battle. But fear and caution become more needful, when the enemy steals upon us in a lurking way, and deceives by pretence of amity: an enemy that moves towards his ends by gestures of so subtle a description as to have acquired therefrom the name of Serpent. Such ever have been the arts of that being: such the dark and insidious plots, by which he makes man his victim; by such, in the beginning of the world, he wrought his deceptions, and deceived, with the blandishment of lying flatteries, the incautious credulity of simple souls. And so too he tried to tempt the LORD Himself, approaching Him by stealth, as if, for the second time, he would gain his end by evading suspicion: he was, however, detected and overpowered, his repulse resulting from his detection. Here, then, we have a lesson before us, of avoiding the way of 'the old man,' and treading in the footsteps of our victorious SAVIOUR; lest we fall back, from incaution, into the

snares of death, and fail, through our neglect of prospective dangers, to possess the immortality which has been gained for us. And how can that immortality be ours, unless we keep those commandments of CHRIST whereby death is driven out and subdued? For CHRIST Himself has warned us in these words, 'If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' And again; 'If ye do the things I command you, henceforth I call you not servants, but friends.' In fine, it is to those who act thus, that he applies the distinction of strength and consistency; and speaks of them as founded in massive solidity upon a rock, rearing themselves amidst all the storms and blasts of this world, in tranquil and motionless stability. 'Whosoever,' He saith, 'heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock: the rain descended, the floods came, the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.' We ought then to repose upon His mandates: all that He has taught and done we ought to learn and to do. Yet how can any man say that he believes in CHRIST, when he does not those things which CHRIST has commanded him to do? How shall the reward of faith belong to the man who keeps no faith with the commandment? Such an one is surely tottering, and will fall away, wafted about by the blasts of error, like dust in a whirlwind; for he who walks not in the way of truth, can make no advance towards salvation.

"We must, therefore, my beloved brethren, regard with suspicion, not only those dangers which are open and manifest, but those still more, which steal treacherously upon us. And in these times, when light is come unto the nations, and the beams of salvation break forth to restore and save, when the deaf hear the voice of spiritual grace, the blind open their eyes upon their GOD, the sick grow strong unto eternal health, the lame hasten unto the Christian communion, and the dumb break out in the expressive accents of prayer, can there be any stronger instance of treachery and stratagem than for this enemy, when he sees the idols left alone, and shrines and temples deserted by the nations of them that believe, to devise the novel artifice of deceiving the credulity even of those who bear the name and title of Christians?

Heresy and schism are his invention, for the subversion of faith, the corruption of truth, the division of unity. Those whom he can retain no longer in the blindness of the former way, he circumvents by betraying them into deviation from their new progress. He tears men away from the Church; and while they imagine themselves to have come unto the light, and to have escaped the night of this world, he secretly infuses a second accession of darkness; so that they continue to call themselves Christians while they stand not by the Gospel of CHRIST, and never heed or obey Him. They walk in darkness, and think they have light; while the enemy flatters and deceives them, transforming himself, as the Apostle says, into an angel of light, and dressing out his emissaries as the ministers of righteousness. These are the maintainers of night for day, of death for salvation, of despair for proffered hope, of perfidy pretending honour, and of anti-Christ instead of CHRIST. They invest falsehood in probabilities, and employ stratagem for the frustration of truth."

2.

The Unity of the Church-system is represented in symbol by our Lord's words to St. Peter.

"These results, my beloved brethren, will continue to operate, so long as men neglect the source whence truth came, by never looking back to the Head over all, or keeping up the form of doctrine, which was delivered to us by our Heavenly Teacher. With those who will weigh the subject in their thoughts, and search it out, it will not be necessary to employ any protracted considerations or arguments. It is easy to argue with a faithful mind, because truth in that case may be stated with brevity. The LORD saith unto Peter, 'I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' And again he says to him, one and

the same, after His resurrection, 'Feed my sheep.' He builds His Church on one. And though He gives an equal power to all the Apostles, saying, 'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. Receive ye the HOLY GHOST. Whosesoever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted to him; whosesoever sins ye retain, they shall be retained:'—yet in order to indicate the principle of unity, he has by his own act established the origin of that unity in the person of one individual. There was no distinction between St. Peter and the other Apostles, but all participated together in honour and power; yet the selection of one individual is the first act in the Church, that the Church may be itself shown to be one: and this one Church the HOLY SPIRIT hath in the Song of Songs designated and declared, 'My dove, my spotless one, is but one; she is the only one of her mother, elect of her that bare her.' "

3.

Episcopacy is a witness for Unity.

"He who holds not this unity of the Church, does he think that he holds the faith? When a man struggles against the Church, and resists it, does he suppose that he continues to belong to it? For surely the blessed Apostle St. Paul teaches the same thing, and indicates the sacredness of unity in these words: 'There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one LORD, one Faith, one Baptism, one GOD.' This unity it is our duty to hold and vindicate with firmness, especially we bishops who preside in the Church, that we may approve our Episcopal authority to be founded in one indivisible principle. Let no man injure the brotherhood by deception; let no man corrupt the truth of our faith by faithless concessions. Episcopal authority is founded in one principle; and the tenure of this authority, however distributed, is associated with a recognition of its indivisible principle. The Church, too, is one, though multiplied far and wide by its naturally prolific

tendency: in like manner as the sun has rays many, yet one light; and the tree has many boughs, yet their strength, from the root upwards, is a single property; and when many streams flow from one head, a character of multiplicity may be developed in the copiousness of their discharge, and yet the unity of their nature must be recognised, in the fountain they proceed from. Divide the ray from the sun, and the principle of unity will negative their separation; lop the bough from the tree, it will want strength to blossom; cut the stream from its fountain, the remnant will be dried up. Thus the Church, invested with light from the LORD, sends out her rays over the whole earth; and yet the light is one, disseminated every where, with no separation of the original body: she stretches forth the rich luxuriance of her branches over all the world, and pours out her onward streams, and spreads into the distance; yet is there one head, one source, one mother, in all the instances of her eventful fecundity."

4.

The Church is ordained by Christ as the fountain of spiritual life.

"It is from her we receive our birth: her milk is our nourishment; her breath, our life. The spouse of CHRIST is a spotless spouse; she is incorruptible, and pure; she recognises but one home, and secures by her purity the sanctity of but one alliance. She keeps us as the property of GOD, and vindicates to His sons their royal inheritance. Whosoever separates from the Church declares himself an alien, and cuts himself off from the inheritance which the Church promises. He cannot obtain the reward which CHRIST gives, who leaves the Church which CHRIST has established: he is an alien: he is impure: he is an enemy. GOD is no more our Father when we cease to be children of the Church. If any one of those escaped who were without the ark of Noah, then will he escape, who trespasses beyond the pale of the Church. The LORD hath given us these words of warning, 'He who is not with me, is against me; and he who gathereth

not with me scattereth.' He who breaks the peace and concord of CHRIST, sets himself against CHRIST. He who gathereth elsewhere but in the Church, scattereth the Church of CHRIST."

5.

One God and Saviour, one Church.

"The LORD saith, 'I and the FATHER are one;' and again, of the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST, it is written, 'and these Three are One.' And does any man believe that this unity, resting in strength from above, and formed by the consecration of Heaven, can be cut asunder in the Church, and separated by the opposition of clashing opinions? He who holds not this unity, holds not the law of GOD, holds not the faith of FATHER and SON, holds not the truth unto salvation. This consecration of unity, this bond of union inseparably coherent, is exhibited in the place in the Gospel, where the coat of our LORD JESUS CHRIST is left entire by persons casting lots for it: so that the garment, instead of being parted, becomes a single possession, and is delivered over complete and perfect. Holy Scripture has these words: 'But for the coat, because it was not sewed, but woven from the top throughout, they said one to another, Let us not rend it, but cast lots whose it shall be.' Here unity descended from the top, to denote that it proceeds from heaven and from the FATHER. And it was out of the question for the receiver or possessor of it to rend it, but he took possession of the whole piece, as a complete and united substance. He wears not CHRIST's garment, who cuts and sunders CHRIST's Church. Now, on the other hand, when, on Solomon's death, his kingdom and people were divided, Ahijah the prophet, meeting Jeroboam the king in the field, divided his garment into twelve parts, saying, Take unto thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, Behold, I rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee, and two tribes shall belong to him, for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen, to place my name there. When the twelve

tribes of Israel were divided, the prophet Ahijah rent his garment. But because CHRIST's people cannot be rent, his coat being woven and conjoined throughout, was not divided by its owners. United, conjoined, co-entwined, it shows the inseparable concord of us, the people who put on CHRIST: so that in this holy instance of his garment, he manifests the unity of the Church."

(*To be continued.*)

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

RECORDS OF THE CHURCH.

No. XX.

THE HOLY CHURCH THROUGHOUT ALL THE WORLD DOTH ACKNOWLEDGE THEE.

St. Cyprian on the Unity of the Church, (continued).

6.

The one Church Catholic, and one only, in every place.

Who then is the criminal and the traitor, who so mad and reckless a schismatic, as either to credit the practicability, or venture on the attempt of putting asunder what God has made one; this garment of the Lord, the Church of Christ? He teaches, He warns us, in His Gospel, "There shall be one fold and one shepherd." And does any suppose that there can be, in one place, either many shepherds or many folds? So too the Apostle, suggesting the same unity, implores and exhorts us; "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you; but that ye be joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." And again He says, "bearing one another's burthens in love, doing all to preserve the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace." Think you that any can stand and live, who retires from the Church, and forms for himself other habitations and a different home? whereas, it was said to Rahab, in whom was prefigured the Church, "Thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all the house of thy father, thou shalt gather unto thee into thine house, and it shall come to pass, whosoever shall go abroad beyond the door of thine house, his blood shall be on his own head." So the Paschal sacrifice contains this simple mandate in the law of Exodus, that the lamb which is slain,

as prefigurative of CHRIST, must be eat in one house. "In one house shall ye eat it, saith the LORD: ye shall not send its flesh abroad from the house." The flesh of CHRIST, the LORD's Sacrament, cannot be sent out of doors: and believers have no other home, but the Church only. This home, this hostelry of love, the HOLY SPIRIT designates and expresses in the Psalms, saying, "GOD who maketh men to dwell with one mind in an house." In the house of GOD, in the Church of CHRIST, men live together with one mind, in concord and simplicity continuing.

Therefore, likewise the HOLY SPIRIT descended in the form of a dove: a simple and joyous animal, not mischievous in its nature, nor dangerous from the use either of its beak or talons; recognising in its affections one single home; each pair nurturing together their common offspring; consorting in their flight when they wander abroad, passing their lives in mutual intercourse; indicating by the gesture of their bills the peacefulness of their union, and every way fulfilling the law of love. The same singleness of mind ought to be seen in the Church, and the same intercourse of affection be maintained; our love of the brotherhood ought to have its pattern in the doves; our mildness and gentleness to be copied from lambs and sheep. Has the spirit of a Christian aught to do with the fierceness of the wolf, or the rage of the dog, the deadly poison of serpents, and the untamed ferocity of wild beasts? We should rejoice that such foes are shut out from the Church, lest they waste the doves and the sheep of CHRIST, by their cruel and poisonous contagion. There can be no amalgamation, no co-union of bitter with sweet, of darkness with light, of fair weather with foul, of war with peace, of plenty with dearth, of drought with fountains, of calm with storm.

7.

Schism an evidence of presumption and perverseness.

Let it not be thought, that those are good men who withdraw from the Church. The wind never carries away the wheat, nor

do storms overthrow the tree which has a solid root to rest on. It is the empty straw that the tempest tosses, it is the sapless tree that the blast of wind overthrows. It is men like these, that the Apostle John points out with a reproach, "they went forth from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, surely they would have remained with us." Hence, often have heresies arisen, and hence do rise, while the perverse spirit puts a period to peace, and perfidy and discord exclude unity. But the LORD permits and suffers these things to be done, maintaining the continuance of individual free-will, that while the heart and spirit are weighed in the balance of truth, the perfect faith of them that are approved may be distinguished and ascertained. The HOLY SPIRIT forewarns us by the Apostle, and says, "it is needful also, that heresies should be, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." Thus are the faithful approved, and thus the faithless detected: so that even before the day of judgment the souls of the righteous are separated from the unrighteous, the wheat distinguished from the chaff.

These are they who take upon them, GOD not willing, to preside over their rash companions, establish themselves in authority without any lawful ordination, and assume the name of Bishop, when no man gives them a Bishoprick. These the HOLY SPIRIT marks out in the Psalms, as sitting in the seat of the noxious; a plague and infection of the faith, deceiving with the serpent's mouth, wise to corrupt truth, breathing out poison unto death with pestilential tongues; whose words eat like a canker; whose writings pour a deadly poison into every breast and heart. Against these the LORD cries out, and reins back and recalls His wandering people, saying, "Hearken not unto the words of the prophets which prophesy falsely, for the vision of their heart maketh them vain. They speak, but not from the mouth of the LORD; they say to those who cast away the word of GOD, there shall be peace unto you; and to all that walk in their own pleasures, every one who walketh in the error of his own heart, evil shall not come upon him. I have not spoken unto them, and they have of their own selves prophesied; if they had stood in me, and had heard my words, and had taught my people, I

would have converted them from their evil thoughts." These same persons the LORD again designates and denotes, saying, "They have deserted Me, the fountain of living water, and have made for themselves broken cisterns, which cannot hold water." There can be but one true Baptism; and yet they think they can baptize. They desert the fountain of life, yet hold out the gift of a living and health-giving water. Men are not cleansed by them, but rather are made filthy: their sins are not wiped away, but verily are heaped up. They are born, not the sons of GOD, but sons of Satan: they are gendered of perfidy, they have lost the gift of faith, they cannot arrive unto the reward of peace, for they have destroyed the peace of the LORD by discord and fury.

8.

Conventicles have no claim to CHRIST'S *promised favours.*

Let no man deceive himself by a mistaken interpretation of the LORD'S words, "wheresoever two or three are gathered together in My name, I am with them." Those who corrupt and falsely interpret the Scriptures, state the latter part of the passage, and omit the former: they attend to one part, and the other they artfully suppress. As themselves are separated from the Church, so do they sunder the purport of a passage which should be undivided. For the LORD, in urging His disciples to maintain unanimity and peace, saith, "I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, touching any thing which ye shall ask, it shall be given you by My FATHER which is in heaven. For wheresoever two or three shall be gathered together in My name, I am with them." Showing that a value is put, not on the number of those who pray, but on their unanimity; "If," He saith, "two of you on earth shall agree together." Unanimity is put first: a peaceful agreement is the previous premise; He faithfully and firmly teaches, that we must agree together. Yet how can any individual be said to agree with another, when he does not agree with the great body and

general brotherhood of the Church? How can two or three be gathered together in CHRIST's name, when they are beyond question separated from CHRIST, and from His Gospel? We do not leave them, but they leave us: and inasmuch as heresies and schisms are naturally gendered of persons forming for themselves separate places of meeting, they are therefore deserters from the source and origin of truth. But the LORD speaks of His Church, and says, in reference to those who are in the Church, that if they be of one mind, if, in the words of His mandate and lesson, but two or three of them gather together and offer up the prayer of one heart, two or three though they be, they will be enabled to receive from the Divine Majesty whatever they pray for. "Wherever two or three are gathered together in My name, I," saith He, "am with them,"—that is, with the single-hearted and peaceful, those who fear GOD, and keep His commandments. With them, He says that He is, though they be but two or three. So was He, with the three children in the burning fiery furnace: and because they had a single heart for God, and stood in concord together, He poured breezy dews over them, enveloped as they were by the surrounding flames. So also with the two Apostles who were shut in prison, because they were of one mind and one spirit, He was present: and drawing back the bolts of their cell, led them again into the market-place of the city, that they might make known to the multitude, that word which they faithfully preached. When therefore, He lays it down in His commandment, and says, "when two or three are gathered together in My name, I am with them." He divides not men from the Church, Himself its Author and Maker, but reproaching the faithless with their discord, and in expressive terms commending peace to the faithful, He shows that He is more present with two or three that pray with one heart than with many persons not agreeing together: and that more may be gained by the united request of a few, than from the prayers of many where discord is among them. It is hence that when He gave rules for prayer He added, "when ye stand and pray, forgive whatever ye have against another, that your FATHER also who is in heaven may forgive you your sins." And any who comes with a quarrel to the sacrifice, He calls back

from the altar, and tells him first to agree with his brother, and then return in peace, and present his oblation to God; for neither had God respect unto Cain's sacrifice; for he could not have God at peace with him, who through envy and discord was not at peace with his brother.

9.

Schism is not expiated by Martyrdom.

What prospect then of peace have they, who are foes to the brethren? What sacrifice do they think they celebrate, when they become rivals of the priesthood? When gathered together beyond the pale of the Church, do they still believe that Christ is in the midst of them? Though men like these were killed in the profession of their faith, not even by their blood would their spot be washed out. The offence of discord is a weighty offence; it includes no expiation, and is absolved by no sufferings. He cannot be a Martyr, who is not in the Church; he cannot attain unto the kingdom who leaveth her to whom the kingdom shall be given. Christ gave us peace. He told us to be of one heart and one mind: He directed that the alliance of affection and endearment should be preserved unbroken and inviolate; so that those who do not maintain the love of brethren, can lay no claim to the honours of martyrdom. The Apostle Paul supports this position by the language he has used: "and though I have faith so that I can remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing; and though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity is of lofty spirit, charity is kind, charity envieth not, charity acteth not amiss, is not puffed up, is not angered, thinketh no evil, is content with all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; charity never faileth." "Charity," he saith, "never faileth." For it will continue to reign for ever, presenting an eternal centre of union to the brotherhood that circles around it. Into the kingdom of Heaven discord can never enter. It meets with no reward from

that SAVIOUR who said, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." He cannot belong to CHRIST, who violates the love of CHRIST by faithless dissensions. He who liveth not in charity liveth not in GOD. It is the word of John, the blessed Apostle: "GOD," saith he, "is love: and he who dwelleth in love, dwelleth in GOD, and GOD in him." They cannot remain with GOD, who will not remain with one heart in GOD's Church. Though they be cast to the flame and to the fire to be burnt, or lay down their lives by being a prey to wild beasts, they will gain, not the crown of faith, but the penalty of perfidy;—their end, not the glorious consummation of religious excellence, but the death-blow of despair. Such men may attain unto death, but never can attain unto the crown.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

RECORDS OF THE CHURCH.
No. XXI.

THE HOLY CHURCH THROUGHOUT ALL THE WORLD DOTH ACKNOWLEDGE THEE.

St. Cyprian on the Unity of the Church, (concluded).

10.

False prophets have been foretold.

THEY profess themselves Christians after the manner in which the Devil puts on CHRIST: as the LORD Himself forewarns us, and says, "Many shall come in my name, saying, I am CHRIST." As he is not CHRIST, though he deceives men with His name, so neither can that man be called a Christian, who does not stand in the truth of CHRIST's Gospel and in faith. To prophesy, to cast out devils, to show great signs on earth, is a high and wonderful thing: yet the man that does these things, possesses not the kingdom of heaven, unless he walk in observance of the strait and right way. The LORD hath uttered this denunciation. "Many shall say to Me in that day, LORD, LORD, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name cast out Devils, and in Thy name done great wonders: and then will I say unto them, I never knew you: Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Righteousness is the thing needful, before we can gain the favour of GOD our Judge. We must obey His commands and warnings, that we may be found meet for our reward. When the LORD in the Gospel would point out with a compendious brevity the path of our hope and faith, He says, "the LORD thy GOD is one: and thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength:

this is the first commandment; and the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." He teaches, according to His office, unity and love. In two commandments he includes all the law and the prophets. But what unity does he keep, what love does he maintain, or have a thought for, who in the mad heat of discord sunders the Church, pulls down its faith, confounds its peace, scatters its love, and profanes its sacraments?

11.

Apostacy in the last times.

Long ago, my beloved brethren, this calamity arose; but the odious pestilence has now advanced in magnitude, and the poisonous mortality of heretical perverseness and schism has begun to stretch upward, and put out its luxuriance. Thus it was to be in the latter days of the world, for the Holy Spirit so prophesied and forewarned us by the Apostle. "In the last days," saith He, "troublous days shall come, and men shall be lovers of their ownselves, proud, boasters, covetous, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, impious, without natural affection, trucebreakers, traitors, heady, swollen with stupidity, loving pleasures more than God, having the form of godliness, but denying its power. Of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts; ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jamnes and Mambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning faith, yet shall they not much prevail; for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as their's also was." All that was predicted, is fulfilled; and now that the last days are arrived, the trial of our faith, in respect both of men and times, is come upon us. As the fury of our adversary increases, error deceives, ignorance exalts, envy inflames, cupidity blinds, impiety depraves, pride inflates, discord exasperates,

and anger hurries men along. Let not, however, this gross and unexpected unbelief of the many move or disturb us: rather let our faith be confirmed through the confidence created by its being announced beforehand. In the same way as some have begun to be of this character, because it was before predicted, so let the other brethren be on their guard against these men; for this too is predicted, the LORD having prepared us by saying, "but be ye on your guard: behold I have told you all, before it come to pass." I entreat you to avoid such men, and drive off their pernicious converse from beside you, and from your hearing, as though it were a mortal pestilence. As it is written, "hedge thine ears with thorns, and be unwilling to hear a wicked tongue." And again, "evil communications corrupt good manners." The LORD teaches and admonishes us to retire from such men. He speaks of the blind leading the blind; if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. That man ought to be avoided and exiled from our society, who is separated from the Church. Such a man is perverse, and a sinner, and condemns himself. Does the man think himself with CHRIST, who strives against the Christian priesthood, and separates himself from the converse of CHRIST's clergy and people? He is bearing arms against the Church; he is fighting against GOD's ordinances, a foe to the altar, a rebel against CHRIST's sacrifice, for honour faithless, for religion sacrilegious, a servant without obedience, a son without piety, a brother without love, setting at nought the Bishops, and despising the Priests of his GOD, he audaciously builds another altar, offers up the unhallowed accents of a separate prayer, and profanes with false sacrifices the truth of the Dominical victim. He is not permitted to be wiser since he who strives against the ordinances of GOD is punished for his temerity and daring by divine reprehension.

12.

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram are a warning to us.

Thus Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who endeavoured to assume to themselves a licence to sacrifice in opposition to Moses, and

Aaron the priest, forthwith paid the penalty of their attempts. The earth burst its fastenings, and opened the depth of its bosom, and while they stood erect and alive, they were swallowed up by the parting gulf. And not only were the leaders smitten with the anger of an indignant God, but two hundred and fifty besides, who were partakers and associates in the same mad undertaking, and had gathered together with these in the same daring spirit, were with speedy vengeance consumed by the fire that went forth from the Lord: warning men, and proving to them, that whatsoever bad men, by human will, attempt for the overthrow of God's ordinances, is done contrary to God's will. Thus also Azias the king when he took the censer, and violently took upon him to sacrifice, in opposition to the law of God, and on Azarias the priest resisting, refused to be obedient and give way, confounded by the Divine anger, was marked by the spot of leprosy upon his forehead; on that part of his body marked by his offended Lord, on which they are marked who have found favour in His sight. The sons also of Aaron, who placed strange fire on the altar, which the Lord had not commanded, were at once consumed by an avenging God. Now all these have their sect and followers in them, who despise the tradition of God, and follow after strange doctrines, clothing themselves with the institutions of man's device; these the Lord reproaches and upbraids in His Gospel, saying, "Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may establish your own tradition."

13.

Schismatising is more heinous than lapsing, and nullifies confessorship.

This crime is worse than that which backsliders appear to commit; and these indeed, when they revert to a state of penitence, deprecate God's wrath by the necessary course. In their case the Church is considered and appealed to; in the other it is opposed. In the former instance there may have been a force introduced; in the latter free-will forms a proportion of the sin in question. The backslider injures only himself; but whoever

attempts the commission of heresy and schism, betrays many by drawing them after him. In the one case, one soul is brought to fall; in the other very many are in jeopardy. The backslider is undoubtedly aware of his transgression, and laments and mourns it; the other, inflated, though guilty, and finding complacency in his sins, separates sons from their mother, entices the sheep from the shepherd, and disturbs the sacraments of God. Moreover the sin of the backslider is single, while the heretic's is reiterated day by day; and lastly, the backslider, if he afterward attain unto martyrdom, may receive the promises of the kingdom; but the other, if put to death beyond the limits of the Church, has no title to the rewards which to the Church belong.

And let no man wonder, my beloved brethren, that certain Confessors also adventure thus far, and thereby draw others into enormities, so unspeakably great. For neither does martyrdom involve a security from the crafts of the Devil, or offer a perpetual immunity to men, while yet they remain in this world, against the world's temptations, dangers, assaults, and attacks. Were it so, we should never witness in confessors those instances of fraud, fornication, and adultery, over which we now groan and grieve. Be a confessor who he may, he is neither a greater nor a better man than Solomon, nor one more dear to God. As long as Solomon walked in the ways of the Lord, so long he retained that grace which God had given him: when he deserted the way of the Lord, he lost also the grace of God, according to that which is written, "and the Lord raised up Satan against Solomon." Therefore also it is written, "keep what thou hast, lest another receive thy crown." Surely God had not threatened that the crown of righteousness should be taken away, unless, when righteousness ceases, the crown must cease also. Confession opens an access to glory, but in itself merits not the crown. It does not perfect praise, but opens the way to a good degree. And since it is written, "whosoever perseveres unto the end, he shall be saved," all that occurs before the end, is the step whereby we mount to the height of salvation, not the end of the course, at which the summit of the pinnacle is attained. Is any a confessor? His danger after a confession is greater, because the

adversary is more provoked. Is he a confessor? He ought for that very reason to stand by the Gospel of the LORD, having through the Gospel attained unto the LORD's glory. For the LORD says, "to whom much is given, of him shall much be required," the proportion of obedience required is measured by the degree of dignity conceded. May none ever perish through the example of a confessor! May no man learn injustice, insolence, or perfidy, from a confessor's conduct! Is any a confessor? Let him be humble and peaceful: let him be modest and disciplined in all he does. As one who is entitled a confessor of CHRIST, let him imitate that CHRIST, whom he confesses. For whereas He saith, "he who exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted;" and whereas He was himself exalted by the Father, because on earth He humbled himself, as the Word, the Power, the Wisdom of GOD the Father, how can He show favour to exaltation, who has at once recommended us in His commandment to be humble, and has received from the Father, in recompence of His humiliation, a name that is above every name? Is any a confessor of CHRIST? it is only if the majesty and dignity of CHRIST be not evil spoken of through him. Let not the tongue that confesses CHRIST speak evil: let it not be found turbulent, or allow the language of reproach and discord to be heard from it. Let it not, after rightly speaking, hurl poison of the serpent against the brethren and priests of GOD. But if a man afterwards become guilty and hateful, if he betrays his profession by evil conversation, and dishonours his life by baseness and profligacy; if, lastly, after being a confessor he becomes a deserter from the Church, sunders the concord of unity, and exchanges what was faith before for unbelief afterwards, he cannot flatter himself that by confession he is elected to the reward of glory, since from this very cause have penalties more condign ensued; for the LORD elected Judas among His Apostles, and yet Judas afterwards betrayed his LORD.

The faith and firmness of the Apostles did not fail in consequence of the secession from their society of Judas the betrayer; nor is the sanctity and dignity of the confessors necessarily impaired, because certain of them break the faith. The blessed

Apostle in his Epistle thus speaks: "For what if certain of them fell from the faith, does their faithlessness bring to nought the faithfulness of God? God forbid." God is "true, though every man be a liar." The greater and better portion of the confessors stand firm in the strength of its faith, and in the law and teaching of the Lord. Those who feel that God has in the Church thought them worthy to find grace, do not retire from the peace of the Church: but from this very cause the title of their faith becomes more illustrious, because withdrawing from the perfidy of those who had been associated in the fellowship of their profession, they have come out from the contagion of guilt, and being illumined by the true light of the Gospel, and irradiated with pure and spotless lustre from the Lord, their glory is as great in preserving the peace of Christ, as had been their triumph when they fought against Satan.

14.

The duty of withdrawing from Schismatics.

It is my desire, most beloved brethren, and likewise I advise and exhort you, that if it be possible, no brother perish, and that our joyful mother may embrace in her bosom the undivided assemblage of her consenting congregation. But if wholesome counsel is unable to recal to the way of salvation certain leaders of schism and authors of dissension, who stand fast in blind and reckless madness, yet let those others among you, who are either betrayed by simpleness or seduced by error, or deceived by the artifices of some treacherous deception, withdraw from the snares of falsehood, free your wandering steps from error, and recognise the strait path which leads to heaven. These are the words of the Apostle's exhortation: "We command you," saith he, "by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to withdraw from all brethren that walk inordinately, and not according to that tradition which they have receive from us." And again he says, "let no man deceive you by vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

Be not ye partakers with them." We must remove ourselves from them that walk aside; in any event we must avoid them, lest while joining those who walk wrongly, and treading in the paths of error and guilt, any man go aside from the way of truth, and become entangled in their guilt. There is one God, there is one Christ, one Church which is His, one faith, one people, conjoined by the bond of concord in the solid unity of one body. The unity cannot be sundered, the individual body cannot be separated by the dissolution of its joints, or be torn in pieces by the rending of its scattered elements. Whatsoever cometh forth from the womb cannot live and breathe in separate portions: it loses the source of existence. The Holy Spirit warns us and says, "What man is there who wishes to live, and would fain see good days? Refrain thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile. Eschew evil and do good; seek peace and ensue it." The son of peace ought to seek and to pursue peace; and to refrain his tongue from the calamity of dissension; if he has felt and loves the bond of charity. Among His divine mandates and salutary lessons, our Lord when nigh to His passion, added this one: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." This inheritance Christ to us hath given. All the gifts He outholds and the rewards He promises are involved in the preservation of peace. If we are heirs of Christ, let us continue in Christ's peace. If we are the sons of God, we ought to be peaceable. "Blessed," saith He, "are the peaceable, for they shall be called the sons of God." Need is that the sons of God should be peaceable, mild in heart, simple in language, united in affection, faithfully attached each to the other by the bonds of unanimity. This unanimity once existed under the Apostles: so that the new assemblage of believers kept the Lord's commandment and maintained its charity. Holy Scripture saith in proof, "the multitude of them that believed acted with one heart and soul." And again, "and they all continued with one heart in communion with the women, and with Mary the mother of Christ, and with His brethren." And therefore they prayed effectually, and were with confidence enabled to obtain whatsoever they required of their Lord's mercy.

15.

Suddenness of Christ's *coming.*

Among us, however, there is as great a defect of unanimity as there is a falling off in the works of charity. Men in those days gave houses and lands for sale, and laying up for themselves treasure in heaven, presented the price to the Apostles, for distribution among the necessitous. But now we do not even give tithes of our estates, and while the Lord saith "sell," we rather buy and gather up. Thus is it that the power of faith languishes, and the believer's strength sinks: and therefore the Lord, in respect of this our age, saith in His Gospel, "When the Son of Man cometh, think you that He will find faith on the earth?" We see that done, which He predicted. In the fear of God, in the law of righteousness, in love, in works, faith is not. No man, in fear of the future, takes thought for the day of the Lord and the anger of God; and no man contemplates the punishment which is to come on unbelievers, and the eternal torments decreed to the faithless. That which our conscience would fear if it believed, because it believes not, it does not fear; if it believed, it would become cautious; if made cautious, it would escape. Let us awake, my beloved brethren, as far as we can; let us break through the slumbers of our former sloth, and rise up to observe and perform the commandments of our Lord. Let us be such as He bade us to be; "let your loins be girded, and your lamps burning, and be ye like unto men who await their Lord, when he cometh from the marriage, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto Him: blessed are those servants, whom their Lord when he cometh shall find watching." We must gird ourselves up, lest when the day of haste cometh, He find us hindered and impeded. Let our light shine in good works, let it so beam, as to lead us on from the night of this world to the splendours of eternal glory. Let us be always anxiously and cautiously on the wait for the sudden coming of

our LORD, that when He knocketh our faith may be found watching, and may receive the reward of vigilance from the LORD. If these commandments are kept, and these warnings and lessons maintained, it will not be for us to slumber, and so be subdued by the wiles of Satan, but we shall reign in the kingdom of CHRIST, as servants that have been found watching.

ST. CYPRIAN'S ACCOUNT OF HIS BAPTISM.

(From his Treatise on the Grace of God, addressed to Donatus.)

For me, while I yet lay in darkness and bewildering night, and was tossed to and fro on the billows of this troublesome world, ignorant of my true life, an outcast from light and truth, I used to think that second birth, which Divine Mercy promised for my salvation, a hard saying according to the life I then led; as if a man could be so quickened to a new life in the laver of healing water, as to put off his natural self, and keep his former tabernacle, yet be changed in heart and soul! How is it possible, said I, for so great a conversion to be accomplished, so that both the obstinate defilement of our natural substance, and old and ingrained habits should suddenly and rapidly be put off, —evils, whose roots are deeply seated within?

Such were my frequent musings;—for whereas I was encumbered with the many sins of my past life, which it seemed impossible to be rid of, so I had used myself to give way to my clinging infirmities, and from despair of better things, to humour the evils of my heart as slaves born in my house and my proper offspring. But, after that life-giving water succoured me, washing away the stain of former years, and pouring into my cleansed and hallowed breast the light which comes from heaven, after that I drank in the Heavenly Spirit, and was created into a new man by a second birth,—then marvellously, what before was doubtful forthwith became plain to me,—what was hidden was revealed,—what was dark began to shine,—what was before difficult now had a way and means, what had seemed impossible now could be achieved,—what was in me of the guilty flesh now confessed that it was earthy,—what was quickened in me

by the HOLY GHOST now had a growth according to GOD. Thou knowest, O my friend, thou knowest, thou canst recollect as well as I, what was then taken from me, and what was given by that death of sin, that quickening power of holiness!

OXFORD.

The Feast of St. Matthias.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

RECORDS OF THE CHURCH.

No. XXII.

THE HOLY CHURCH THROUGHOUT ALL THE WORLD DOTH ACKNOWLEDGE THEE.

Tertullian on Baptism.

The tract, of which the following are extracts, was written in opposition to a sect of early heretics, of the Gnostic stock, called Caiani, or Cainites, from the honour they paid to Cain; or, rather, against one Quintilla, a female preacher, who had belonged to this sect, and had added to its impieties the special error of denying the use of baptism, on the pretence that *faith* was sufficient for salvation without it. Tertullian's treatise was written about A.D. 202.

Blessed is the Sacrament of Water, in which, when cleansed, we are released from the sins of our original blindness, unto eternal life! . . . How great is the power of stubbornness, to unsettle the Faith, or even to reject it altogether, when we find it impugns it, on account of the very articles it contains. Nothing so hardens men's minds, as that simplicity of divine works which is seen in the doing of them, contrasted with the greatness which is promised as the effect of them. For instance, in the case before us; since the candidate for baptism is plunged into water in so simple a way, without many ceremonies, without any novel ado, without cost, and is bathed with a few words said over him, and then rises not much or not at all cleaner to look at, therefore it is considered incredible that he can have gained thereby an eternal gift. . . . Wretched incredulity! to deny to God His own characteristics, simplicity and power. What, then? is it *not* wonderful that even a bath should wash away death? surely; but let us even be the more ready to believe, if its marvellousness, forsooth, is made a reason for unbelief. For what should be the character of divine works, but surpassing marvellousness? We, ourselves, marvel also, but because we do believe. Incredulity marvels without believing; at what is simple, as being contemptible; at what is great, as being impossible. Be it so: yet the divine announcement has gone before,

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and is sufficient to establish both what seems contemptible, and what seems impossible. "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound its wisdom; and what is of surpassing difficulty with men, is easy with Him." . . . Mindful of this announcement, as a principle to guide us, let us consider the so-called foolishness and impossibility of the doctrine, that we are new made by water. . . .

It is said, "in the beginning God made the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." My first reason, then, O man, for reverencing water, is its antiquity; next, the honour put upon it, inasmuch as it was the abode of the Divine Spirit, and thus had more of grace in it than the other elements then existing. For as yet the darkness was unrelieved by the embellishment of the stars; there was the dreary abyss, the unfashioned earth, the untempered heavens; only water, a substance ever perfect, bright, uncompounded, pure in itself, a worthy receptacle of the presence of God. Moreover, when the world was to be brought into form, it was by means of water, as the harmonizing principle, that God effected it. He suspended the firmament of the heavens, by dividing the waters; and the firm land by separating them; and next, when the world was duly-shaped, and inhabitants were to be given it, it was first commanded the waters, to bring forth living things, water was the first substance to give out the breath of life; no wonder, then, that, in baptism, it has the gift of quickening. . . .

The angel came in the midst, and moved the pool of Bethesda; those who felt their sickliness, waited for his coming. . . That figure of bodily healing intimated the healing of the soul, in the way in which visible things go first, as the symbol of things spiritual; so, when the grace of God was accorded to men, more came to them than mere water and an angel. Man receives that Spirit of God which he had once received from His breathing on him, but afterwards had lost by transgression. Not that we obtain the Holy Spirit in the water; but, by being cleansed in the water from sin and guilt, we are prepared by the angel for the Holy Spirit. . . . . Next, on coming out of the water, we are anointed over with the consecrated ointment according to the ancient usage, by which oil was used as an introduction into the

priesthood. . . . Afterwards hands are laid on us invoking and calling down the HOLY SPIRIT, by the form of benediction. . . . And then that HOLIEST SPIRIT willingly descends from the FATHER upon the body thus cleansed and blessed ; settles upon the baptismal waters, as acknowledging its ancient dwelling-place, as once He lighted on the LORD in the figure of a dove, to show His nature by its simplicity and innocence. For as, after the waters of the flood, which washed away the old iniquity, after the baptism (as I may say) of the world, the dove, sent out of the ark, and returning with the olive branch, became the herald of GOD's anger appeased, and has made the olive a sign of peace among the nations, according to a like appointment, the spiritual influence, the dove of the HOLY SPIRIT flies to the earth (that is, our flesh) when emerging from the waters after its old transgressions, bringing the reconciliation of GOD sent from heaven, where the Church is, the antitype of the ark. But the earth sins yet again . . . and so is destined to the fire : as man also, who renews his sins after baptism ; so that here, too, we may take the history as a warning. . .

John's baptism afforded our LORD the subject of a question proposed to the Pharisees, viz. whether it was from heaven or from earth ? They could return no sound answer, as not understanding, because they did not believe. . . . John supplied no heavenly work, but ministered beforehand towards things heavenly, viz. as being the master of repentance, which is in man's power. . . If, then, repentance is a human work, the baptism of repentance is human ; it had supplied the HOLY GHOST and remission of sins, if it had been heavenly. GOD alone remits sins, and vouchsafes the SPIRIT. . . That was not heavenly which manifested nothing of a heavenly nature. Even the spirit of prophecy, which for a season had been a heavenly gift possessed by John, afterwards, when the fulness of the SPIRIT was transferred to the LORD, so utterly failed him, that he sent to ask whether He were really the CHRIST, whom He had before foretold, and singled out on His coming. . . . .

These miserable men say, " Baptism is not necessary, because faith is sufficient for the Christian ; for Abraham pleased GOD by faith, without any sacrament of water." But in all things, what comes last is the conclusive, and supersedes what went before. Though salvation came by mere faith, before the LORD's

passion and resurrection, yet when faith is enlarged by the doctrines of the Nativity, Passion, and Resurrection, the covenant receives an enlargement also, viz. the seal of baptism, as though a sort of garment for faith, which before was naked, but now is sanctioned by its peculiar appointments. For the appointment of dipping is given, and a form of words prescribed. . .

We have but one Baptism, whether in Gospels or Epistles; there is one God, one Baptism, one Church in the heavens. . . . Once only we enter the sacred water, once we wash away our sins, because to repeat them is not a Christian's part. Israel, according to the law, uses daily washings, as being daily defiled. To hinder this practice in us, the doctrine of the one baptism has been set forth. Blessed is the water which cleanses once for all, which sinners cannot make light of, which receives no stain from the recurrence of defilement, so as to pollute those whom it washes. . . .

Easter is the most solemn time for baptism; when the passion of the Lord, into which we are baptized, was accomplished. We may suitably apply our Lord's words, when He sent His disciples to prepare for His last passover. "Ye shall find a man," he said, "bearing a pitcher of water." . . . Next, the season of Pentecost. Blessed are ye for whom the grace of God is waiting, what time ye ascend out of that holiest bath of your new birth, and first spread out your hands in your mother's presence with your brethren; ask of the Father, ask of the Lord who imparts His many gifts, and says, "Ask and ye shall find." For ye have already sought, and ye have found; ye have knocked, and it has been opened to you. Only I pray, that when you ask, you would also remember me, Tertullian a sinner.

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The Feast of St. John the Baptist.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

RECORDS OF THE CHURCH.

No. XXIII.

THE HOLY CHURCH THROUGHOUT ALL THE WORLD DOTH ACKNOWLEDGE THEE.

From the Acts of the African Martyrs.

"This is the account of the Martyrdom of the Holy Felix, Bishop of Tubyza[1], who for God's Law, was beheaded on the 18th of the Calends of February[2]." [CCCIV.]

In those days Diocletian and Maximian, (both surnamed Augustus,) being Consuls, the former for the eighth time, the latter for the seventh time, there went out a decree from these same Cæsars, or Emperors over the whole face of the earth, and it was set forth through all the colonies and cities to the princes and magistrates, to each one in his place, "that they should seize the sacred[3] books of the Christians out of the hands of the Bishops and Presbyters."

Whereupon this proclamation was published in the city of Tubyza, on the day of the nones of January, [Jan. 5th.] Then

[1] *Tubyza* does not appear in the maps. In a list of persons present at a conference held at Carthage, in the time of Honorius, (June, 411,) appears "Maurentius *Tuburzicensis.*"

[2] xviii. *Kalendas Febr.* i. e. the 15th of January. There must, however, be some mistake, if the Programma was set forth on the Nones of January, (*i. e.* the 5th,) as there were at least thirty-five days between that day and the day of Felix's Martyrdom at Nola.

[3] *Libros deificos.*—Tertull. Apol. §. 11. "Deum deificum." Cypr. Ep. lxviii. & De Zelo, "deifica disciplina." Ep. lxxv. "spiritalis et deifica sanctitas." Crescens a Cirta, in Concil. Carthag. "testimonia ex scripturis deificis descendentia."

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Magnilian, the mayor [1] of that city, ordered the Presbyters to be brought before him, (because Felix, their Bishop, was gone to Carthage,) he ordered, I say, Januarius, the Presbyter, and Fortunatus and Septimius, the readers, to be brought before him.

To whom Magnilian, the mayor, said—"Have you a Bishop?"

Januarius, the Presbyter, answered—"We have."

Magnilian.—"Where is he?"

Januarius.—"I know not."

Magnilian.—"Have you any sacred books?"

Januarius.—"We have."

Magnilian.—"Give them up, that they may be burnt."

Januarius, *Fortunatus*, and *Septimius*.—"Our Bishop has them at his own house," [or, "with him."]

Magnilian.—"Well then, you must remain in custody till you appear before Anulinus, the Proconsul, to answer for your conduct."

But the next day Felix, the Bishop, came from Carthage to Tubyza. And when Magnilian had notice of his arrival, immediately he ordered him to be taken into custody, and brought before him. Accordingly, he came with all possible speed, and as soon as he was come, Magnilian said to him—"Art thou Felix, the Bishop of this city?" Felix answered—"I am."

Magnilian.—"Deliver up to me all books or parchments of what kind soever which may be in thy possession."

Felix.—"I have some in my possession. But I shall not deliver up the law of my adored Lord and Master."

Magnilian.—"What then, is your God greater than our gods?"

Felix.—"Our God is great, and greatly to be feared. He it is who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are therein. Whereas your gods are of stone, the work of men's hands; of whom it is written, 'They have eyes, and see not. They have ears, and hear not. They have mouths, and speak not. They that make them are like unto them, and all who trust in them.'"

[1] *Curator*, a High-Bailiff or Mayor, or perhaps Sheriff.

Magnilian.—" The Emperors' command is the chief thing to be attended to, and what thou talkest of is all nothing. So give up all the books which thou hast, that they may be burnt with fire, according to the decree."

Felix.—" It were better that I should give up my body to the fire, than that the LORD's Scriptures should seem to be burnt by my means. For it is good to obey GOD, the immortal, everlasting King, rather than an Emperor of the world, when he commands that which is wicked to be done."

Magnilian.—" I have already told thee, that the Emperors' command is the chief thing to be regarded, and not what you talk of."

Felix.—" The chief thing is to keep the commandments of GOD, rather than to obey men."

Magnilian.—" I allow thee a space of three days wherein to recollect thyself. For if here, in thy own city, thou refuse to fulfil the decree, thou must go to the Proconsul, and plead before his court the things which thou hast now been saying."

After three days Magnilian, the mayor, commanded the holy Bishop, Felix, to be brought into his presence. And when he was brought in, Magnilian said, " Hast thou deliberated with thyself, and come to any better determination ?"

Felix.—" My word is one and the same ; where it began, there also by GOD's grace it shall finish. For the things which I said at first, the same I now also say, and before the Proconsul, I shall not utter any thing else whatever."

Magnilian.—" Well, then, thou shalt go straight to the Proconsul, and there give an account for thyself, as he shall examine thee."

Then he thus spoke to his men. " Inasmuch as Felix the Bishop is in no respect willing to act according to the decrees of the Emperors, which they had graciously communicated to us, let him be taken to Carthage, and do you accompany him thither."

To which Felix answered,—" GOD be praised."

Then one Vincentius, a Senator [1], of the city of Tubyza, was

[1] *Decurio*, a Senator in the Colonies.

appointed to have the charge of him, and so Felix set out for Carthage.

When he was arrived there, he presented himself before the Lieutenant of the Proconsul. And this Lieutenant said to him, "What is thy reason for not giving up these foolish writings (Scriptures)?"

The Bishop answered,—"I confess I have them in my possession, but I will not part with them. The Scriptures which we have are not foolish, nor can they on any account be given up by us."

Upon this the Lieutenant ordered him to be put into the dungeon. Into which when the Bishop was entered, he offered this prayer to the Lord his God, saying,

"O Lord God! Creator and Governor of all things! O Lord Jesu Christ! I beseech Thee, do not forsake me, seeing that for Thee and Thy Testament I suffer these things. Have pity on me, O Lord! and receive my spirit; let my mortal body perish in this world, that according to Thy gracious promise I may be counted worthy to be clothed with immortality with Thee. For ever living in Thee, O Lord, death shall have no power against me."

But sixteen days afterwards, at the fourth hour of the night, the Bishop was brought forth from the prison, and at once introduced into the presence of Anulinus, the Proconsul.

And Anulinus said to him,—"What is thy name?"

Felix.—"I am a Christian."

Anulinus.—"I did not inquire concerning thy profession,—but I asked by what name thou art called."

Felix.—"As I said before, so now I say to thee again, I am a Christian and a Bishop."

Upon this, Anulinus being angry that he had refused to tell him his name, said to him,—"Hast thou any foolish writings?"

The Bishop answered,—"I have some writings, but they are not foolish, as thou dost assert; and know thou for certain, that I will on no account ever give them up."

Upon this the Proconsul ordered that he should be sent off to Rome, to the Prefect of the Guard.

When Felix the Bishop had come thither, and had presented himself before the Prefect, he ordered that he should be taken to prison, and bound with greater chains.

But after twelve days, the Prefect of the Guard ordered him to be put on ship-board, to sail after the Emperors.

So the Bishop went on board the ship very heavily laden with chains, and was in the hold of the ship four days and four nights, under the horses' feet, having no bread to eat, nor a drop of water to drink. And in this famishing state he came to Nola.

Then the Chief Judge [1] of that city, as soon as the Bishop came, ordered him to be brought into his presence loaded as he was with very heavy chains.

And the Judge said to him,—"Felix, how camest thou hither?"

The Bishop answered,—"As it pleased God."

Then said the Judge,—"If in thy own city, or at Carthage, thou wouldst have given up your divine Scriptures, thou wouldst not have come all this way to me."

To whom the Bishop replied,—"I have, I confess, the divine Scriptures; but as thou art not ignorant of the answer I have returned to others who have questioned me, so now to thyself I make known with all possible assurance, that I shall on no account whatever give them up."

The Judge answered,—"If thou dost not give up your sacred Scriptures, thou wilt forfeit thy life."

The Bishop replied,—"I am more ready to forfeit my life than to give up the Lord's books into sacrilegious hands."

Then the Judge bethought himself to have the Emperors' decrees recited. And when they had been read by Vincentius, the Secretary, the Judge said:—"Since this man hath remained so long in the same confession, according to the decree, I give sentence, that this same Bishop, Felix, shall be beheaded with the sword."

Upon this, the Bishop raised his eyes to Heaven, and said, "O God, I thank Thee. Thou who hast graciously enabled me to remain faithful to Thee in this world, during six and fifty

[1] *Cognitor*, properly, a Proctor or Attorney,—here a Criminal Judge.

years. O LORD GOD of Heaven and Earth, FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, for the sake of Thee and Thy law, and for Thy honour, I suffer this, and yield my neck to the slaughter. Receive my spirit, O LORD, out of this dying world; for Thou art the Living GOD, invincible and eternally glorious, world without end. *Amen.*"

Having finished his prayer, he was led away by the soldiers, and in that same place, namely, in Nola, he was beheaded, on the 18th of the calends of Feb. [January 15, CCCIV.]

ACCOUNT OF THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. LAURENCE, ARCHDEACON OF ROME, A.D. 258.

(From a Sermon of St. Augustine's.)

LAURENCE was a deacon, ministering to the Apostles, though after their age. When that persecution, as prophesied in the Gospels against the Christians, furiously raged at Rome as elsewhere, and the property of the Church was demanded of Laurence as Archdeacon, he is said to have made answer, "Send with me carriages, in which to convey to you the treasures of the Church." The appetite of avarice was forthwith roused; but wisdom the while knew what he was about. The order was given; as many carriages as he had asked were sent. He asked for many; so much the more was the hope of booty excited. He filled them with the POOR OF CHRIST, and so returned with them. When asked the meaning of all this, he answered, "These are the Church's riches." The baffled persecutor gave command to kindle the fire; he was not so cold as to be afraid of it. So a fierce punishment consumed his body, while love of the brethren burnt more keenly in his soul.

In a word, the iron hurdle (or gridiron) was brought, and he was broiled upon it; one side at length caught fire, yet he is said so serenely to have borne his torments, as to fulfil the Gospel precept, "In your patience possess ye your souls."—Consumed in the flame, yet serene in his patience, he said; "The meal is now dressed; turn me, and eat." Such was his Martyrdom; such his glorious crown. Such his service to Rome, beyond price. Of him CHRIST spoke, "He who shall lose his life for My sake, the same shall find it." He found it by means of faith, contempt of the world, Martyrdom. What must his glory be with God, when even among men he had such excellent praise!

Let us follow his steps in faith, in contempt of the world. Not Martyrdom only, but faith inviolate and perfect charity will secure all heavenly blessings, for the followers of CHRIST * * * What is more glorious than for a man to sell his possessions and buy CHRIST therewith, to offer up to GOD the most acceptable of

gifts, a poor mind, an unsullied devotion? to attend on CHRIST, when He shall come to take vengeance on His enemies, to sit at His side when He is on the judgment-seat, to be fellow heir with Him, to be made equal with the Angels, to rejoice with Patriarchs, Apostles, Prophets, in the possession of the heavenly kingdom? What persecution, what tortures, have power to subdue such thoughts? The mind is obstinate, brave, and stable, which is trained in religious meditations; the heart persists unmoved against all the terrors of Zabulon, and the threats of the world, when a sure and real faith in things to come braces it. The eyes are shut in persecution, but heaven is revealed. Antichrist threatens, but CHRIST protects. Death is inflicted, but immortality follows....How great the honour and the peace, to go hence into joy, to go through straightness into glory, to shut the eyes suddenly, by which the world is seen, to open them again forthwith, and to see Almighty GOD!....How great is the speed! You are snatched from the earth, you are laid up safely in heavenly mansions. Let these be our thoughts and our consolations day and night; that when persecution comes on GOD's soldier, it may find in him a virtue ready for battle, proof against defeat. Or if he be summoned away first, that faith, which was prepared for martyrdom, will find its immediate reward, by the merciful judgment of GOD. The crown is given in persecution to those who serve gallantly in peace, to those who stand and wait.

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

RECORDS OF THE CHURCH.

No. XXIV.

THE HOLY CHURCH THROUGHOUT ALL THE WORLD DOTH ACKNOWLEDGE THEE.

Vincentius of Lerins on the Tests of Heresy and Error.

Vincentius was a member of the Monastery of Lerins, a small island off the south coast of France. He is famous for the treatise, parts of which it is here proposed to translate for the English reader, as a fit companion to the extracts from Tertullian's account of the Rule of Faith, which formed the xvii. and xviii. Numbers of the Records. Vincentius wrote in the year 434.

1. (c. 1, 2.)

I HAVE made frequent and earnest inquiries of a great number of holy and learned men, *how* I might discriminate, that is, what certain and universal rule there was for discriminating, between Catholic truth and heretical pravity; and I have ever received something like the following answer, that whether I myself, or any other private person, wished to detect the corruptions, and avoid the snares of heretics who were springing up, and to remain sound and whole in the sound faith, there were two ways, by GOD's blessing, of preserving himself,—first, by the authority of Scripture, next by the teaching of the Church Catholic.

Here some one perhaps will demand, *why* I need make mention of the Church's understanding of Scripture at all, considering that the Canon of the Scriptures is perfect and self-sufficient, nay, more than sufficient for all things? To which I answer, that the very depth of Holy Scripture prevents its being taken by all men in one and the same sense, one man interpreting it

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in one way, one in another; so that it seems almost possible to draw from it as many opinions as there are readers. Novatian, Photinus, Sabellius, Donatus, Arius, Eunomius, and Macedonius, Apollinaris, and Priscillian, Jovianus, Pelagius, and Celestius, lastly Nestorius, each of these heretics has his own distinct interpretation of it. This is why it is so necessary, viz. in order to avoid the serious labyrinths of such various errors, to direct the line of interpretation, both as to Prophets and Apostles, according to the sense of the Church, and Catholic world.

[To apply this to the present day. Supposing a private and unlearned Christian is made anxious, by witnessing the number of persuasions, as they are called, among us. First let him not be alarmed at the difficulty of choosing; there were as many such in the early Church. Suppose he falls in with a Socinian, or (as such a one will call himself) a Unitarian; he will probably find, on talking with him, that such a man does not admit the Scriptures to be divine; rejects some books or parts of books, speaks disparagingly of the Old Testament, perhaps explains away the inspiration of the whole Bible. Here then Vincent's rule at once detects the heretic: he will not submit to have his opinions tried "by the authority of Scripture," much less "by the teaching of the Catholic Church." Escaping this snare, our inquirer next falls in the way of a Baptist, or Independent, each of whom professes to go by Scripture,—but adopts his own private interpretation of it. Here the second test applies; the man in question rejects the Church's interpretation of Scripture, for nothing can be more certain than that infant baptism and the Episcopal succession have been received from the first all through the Church Catholic. This rule then, provided by Vincent, greatly simplifies the difficulty of deciding between parties; indeed it reduces our choice to an alternative between two—the Church established among us, and to the Latin or Roman Catholic communion. And, when we attain to this point, we shall soon see our way quite clear.

If it be asked *why* should we go by this rule of primitive authority? it may be replied, first, that on the very face of it, it is a very sensible rule; all of us admit the authority of Scripture; again, all of us know that there are various interpretations of Scripture, and, if so, which is so likely to be right as that which was received, taught, and handed down in the early Church? But again St. Paul expressly calls the Church "the pillar and ground of the truth;" it was intended then to maintain and teach the truth, and when is it to be listened to, if not in the times following immediately on the Apostles? And it may be observed, that Vincentius says he had received the rule from the teachers and religious men of his time; they not only maintained one certain interpretation of Scripture, but did not allow that any other interpretation could be put upon it.—Of course: for the Divine Word can have but one sense.]

2. (c. 3, 4.)

Again, much attention is to be paid in the Church Catholic itself, to maintain what has been believed EVERYWHERE, ALWAYS, and BY ALL. This is true and genuine Catholicism, as the very word means, comprehending all truths every where, and truly; and this will be ours, if we follow in our inquiries *Universality*, *Antiquity*, and *Consent*. We shall follow *Universality*, if we confess that to be the one true faith, which is held by the Church all over the world; *Antiquity*, if we in no respect recede from the tenets which were in use among our Holy Elders and Fathers; and *Consent*, if, in consulting antiquity itself, we attach ourselves to such decisions and opinions as were held by all, or at least by almost all, the ancient Bishops and Doctors.

What then will the Catholic Christian do, in a case where any branch of the Church has cut itself off from the communion of the universal faith? What can he do but prefer the general body which is sound, to the diseased and infected member of it?

[This may be illustrated by the case of the Church of Geneva among others, which near three centuries since broke off from the great Episcopal communion, took to it a head of its own, new laws and customs, and in part a new creed. It is our duty then, according to Vincentius, to keep fast by the old stock of the Church Catholic, and guard against all infection of our faith or discipline from such schismatical members.]

What if some novel contagion attempt with its plague-spots, not only a portion, but even the whole Church? Then he will be careful to keep close to antiquity, which is secure from the possibility of being corrupted by new errors.

[This case had been instanced even before Vincentius's time, in the history of the Arians. In our own day it is fulfilled in the case of the Church of Rome, which indeed has not erred *vitally*, as the Arians did, nor has infected with its errors the whole Church, yet has to answer for very serious corruptions, which it has not merely attempted, but managed to establish in a great part of the Churches of Christendom. Here then apply Vincentius's test, Antiquity;—and the Church of Rome is convicted of unsoundness, as fully as those other sects among us which have already been submitted to the trial.]

What if even in antiquity itself there be two or three men, nay one community, or even province, discovered in error? Then he will be careful to prefer to the rashness or ignorance of the few (if so be) the ancient decrees (*i. e.* in Council) of the Universal Church. What if a case arises when no such acts of the Church are found? then he will do his best to compare and search out the opinions of the ancients; of those, that is, who in various times and places, remaining in the faith and communion of the one Catholic Church, are the most trustworthy authorities; and, whatever, not one or two, but all alike, with one consent, held, wrote, and taught, and that openly and perseveringly, that he will understand is to be believed without hesitation.

[Take, for instance, the case of the society of Friends (so called); they reject baptism altogether: so did some heretics of the second century, whom Tertullian wrote against (vide Records, No. 22); yet that of course is no defence of them against the general consent of the Doctors of the Church. Or again, the authority of Jerome, who wrote in the fourth century, is brought by some Anti-Episcopalians, to justify their rejection of Bishops: but, were he ever so clearly for them, (which we by no means allow) yet his authority would go for nothing against the *consent* of the ancient teachers.]

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3. (c. 12. 14, 15. 39.)

Let us seriously dread to incur the guilt of altering the faith and violating religious truth, which we are warned against by the judgment of Apostolic authority as well as by the received rule of the Church. All know how seriously, how sternly, how forcibly the blessed Apostle Paul inveighs against certain light-minded men, who had passed with strange rapidity from him who called them to the grace of Christ, into another Gospel which was not another, who had heaped to themselves masters at their own pleasure, turning away the ear from the truth and converted to fables, having damnation, because they had made void their first faith. When, then, such men went about provinces and cities, offering their lying doctrines for sale, and at length came to the Galatians, and the Galatians seized somehow with a nausea of Divine truth, and putting away the manna of the Apostolic and Catholic doctrine, refreshed themselves with the filth of

heretical novelty, then the authority of an Apostle was roused in him, and he settled the matter with an unmixed severity. "Though we," he says, "or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema, an accursed thing." What is the meaning of his saying, "Though we?" why not rather, "Though I?" This, viz. though Peter, though Andrew, though John, though in a word the whole company of the Apostles preached as the Gospel other doctrines than we have already preached, let him be anathema. Tremendous ban! that he may maintain the supremacy of the original faith, he spares neither himself nor his fellow-Apostles;—yet even this is not all. He adds, "Though an angel from heaven, let him too be anathema." Not as if the holy and heavenly angels can sin; but he says, If that were possible, which is impossible; whoever he be, who would tamper with the faith once delivered, let him be anathema.

But perhaps it will be said that this injunction was intended for the particular time when it was given, and is not in force now. If so, why should his other commandments be in force at this day, such as, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh?" But if the latter supposition is at once profane and pernicious, it follows of necessity that, as the command to be spiritual is for all ages, so the sanction given to the immutability of the faith is for all ages also. Therefore, to preach any doctrine to Catholic Christians, besides what they have received, was never lawful, is no where lawful, never shall be lawful; and to anathematize those who do preach a doctrine besides that which was once given and received, was never but a duty, is no where but a duty, never shall be but a duty. If this be so, is there a person to be found so venturesome as to preach, or so light of mind as to receive, doctrines in addition to those which the Church has received and the Church preaches! Let him cry aloud, let him cry out again and again, to all, and in all times, and in all places, by means of his Epistles, that elect vessel, that teacher of the Gentiles, that clarion among the Apostles, that herald on the earth, that guest of the third heaven. If any one bring in any new doctrine, let him be anathema! And

on the other side let them raise their counter voice, as the frogs or flies of Egypt, or insects of a day, I mean such as the Pelagians. Let them say, Take us for your authority, for your guides, for your expositors, in condemning what you used to hold, in holding what you used to condemn, in rejecting the ancient faith, your fathers' usages, the trust committed to you by your ancestors, and in receiving—what? I tremble to say what; so proud are their words, that to pronounce them, nay even to refute them, seems to involve some sort of pollution.

But it may be said, why then does Providence so often allow distinguished persons in the Church to preach novelties to Catholics? A fair and profitable question, which I shall answer, not by any attempted explanation of my own, but by the authority of the Divine law, and the example of an inspired teacher of the Church. Holy Moses teaches us, why learned men, men who by reason of their gift of knowledge are even called Prophets by the Apostle, are sometimes permitted to preach their new doctrines, or as they are called in the figurative style of the Old Testament, "other gods." "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams," that is, a teacher constituted in the Church, whom his followers or hearers consider to speak as from revelation. What then? he continues, "and he giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass." It is plain some great teacher or other is spoken of, one of surpassing knowledge, so as to seem to his partisans to have the gift even of foreknowledge, such as is attributed by their disciples to Valentinus, Donatus, Photinus, Apollinaris, and the like. What follows? "And shall say to thee, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;" "Other gods," that is, errors external to the Church . . . . "serve them," that is, believe them, follow them. "Thou shall not hearken unto the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams." Now, why is it that God allows to be taught, what He does not allow to be received? Moses continues, "for the Lord your God *proveth you*, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul." And doubtless the temptation is great, when he whom you consider

to be a prophet, one of the sons of the prophets, a doctor and champion of truth, and hold in highest veneration and love, when he suddenly and secretly is the author of mischievous errors, which the strain of teaching he has made familiar to you, incapacitates you from quickly detecting, and affection for himself seems to make it undutiful in you to condemn.

I say, whoever he be, how holy and learned soever, whether Bishop, whether Confessor and Martyr, if he teaches aught beyond or contrary to the doctrine of all the Fathers, let it be set apart from the common, public, and general doctrine, which has authority, and numbered among his peculiar, hidden, and private surmises, lest, at the extreme risk of eternal ruin, we fall into the ways of heretics and schismatics, giving up the universally received truth, and following the novel error of an individual.

[Augustine, who was contemporary with Vincentius, affords an instance in illustration of the last sentence. His peculiar views of election were beyond, not to say contrary, to those of the Church ever before him, and called for precautions on the part of Christians, lest by mixing them up with Christianity, they acted *like* heretics, whose peculiar tenets have always been originally the innovations of one or two subtle and venturous minds upon or counter to what has been received.

As to cases of actual error, such as that of the false prophet introduced by Vincentius, there has been since his time a most deplorable and astounding instance of this in the corruptions of the Latin Church, whether they be called heresy or not. Considering the high gifts and the strong claims of the Church of Rome and its dependencies on our admiration, reverence, love, and gratitude, how could we withstand it as we do; how could we refrain from being melted into tenderness and rushing into communion with it, but for the words of Truth itself, which bid us prefer It to the whole world? "He that loveth father or mother more than ME, is not worthy of ME;" How could we learn to be severe, and execute judgment, but for the warning of Moses against even a divinely gifted teacher, who should preach new gods; and the anathema of St. Paul even against Angels and Apostles, who should bring in a new doctrine?

And lastly, what a noble comment is here given us upon the prohibition of Christ to call any one on earth our Master! and how elevating a thought is it to reflect that the precept so explained has ever been acted upon by the Church Catholic! We have no human head in matters of doctrine, we acknowledge every single Christian, however exalted, to be but an individual, to have no intrinsic authority, no power, no influence except so far as he is the organ of the whole body of Christian teachers. In this we differ from heretics and Dissenters.

They follow particular teachers, and call themselves after their names. We follow Christ only; even in following the old fathers, we follow them, not as if they were commissioned expounders, but simply as being witnesses of the truth once delivered, and to be followed in matters of necessary faith simply because and so far as they agree together. Their mutual agreement is the test of their being faithful witnesses, which is all we seek after; we attribute nothing to them as oracles of the truth, much less to individuals now a days. Let a man be gifted with eloquence, ready talent, deep penetration, vigorous grasp of mind; let him be amiable, sympathizing, winning; let him bear upon him the evidence of earnestness and disinterested piety; let him be zealous, active, patient, self-denying; let him have a noble heart, and a resolute hand, and many followers, yet if he keeps to the ancient truth it is well. But if he departs from it, that instant MENE and TEKEL are written upon his school. The ground crumbles from under him, his rod of influence is broken, his glory is departed; he is no more. He has what he had not while he was a transmitter of Catholic Verities, a *name;* and it is borne after him by his party as a witness against him and them.]

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TRACTS FOR THE TIMES.

RECORDS OF THE CHURCH.

No. XXV.

THE HOLY CHURCH THROUGHOUT ALL THE WORLD DOTH ACKNOWLEDGE THEE.

Vincentius of Lerins on the Tests of Heresy and Error.
(Concluded.)

4. (c. 25.)

It follows, that he is the real and genuine Catholic, who loves God's truth, and the Church, and the body of Christ, who makes all things second to divine religion and the Catholic faith, whether the authority of private men, or their amiable qualities, or their talent, or eloquence, or philosophy; but not regarding any of these, and remaining fixed and stedfast in the faith, deliberately maintains that, and that only, which the Church Catholic is known to have held every where from the beginning; and considers as a temptation, not as a religious truth, whatever novelty has been secretly introduced by some private hand, beside, or even contrary to, the Body of Saints. And, above all, as being taught by St. Paul, he receives that heresies must be, in order that the approved may become manifest among us, as if this were the reason why heresiarchs are not at once taken away by Divine Providence; that the con-

stancy of each of us, and fidelity, and steady love of Catholic truth may be ascertained. And, in fact, on the bursting forth of each novelty in its turn, then forthwith is discerned the weight of the corn, and the emptiness of the chaff; and so, without much trouble, the threshing-floor is cleared of whatever rubbish was contained in it. Some fly off at the instant; others are driven a certain way, but are afraid of perdition while they are ashamed to recant; and so they continue wounded, half dead, half alive, with just so much of the poison within them as is neither fatal nor yet is thrown off; neither kills nor suffers to live. Ah, miserable state of feverish and agitating anxiety! At one time they are hurried aside as the wind drives them; at another they fall back again like ebbing waves: now with rash presumption they assent to doctrines which are but doubtful, now again they have a superstitious dread of what is unquestionable; uncertain whither to go, whither to return; what to seek, to avoid, to maintain, to give up. Surely, this trouble of an unsettled heart is a medicine, if they are wise, sent to them by divine mercy. They are tossed, and beaten, and almost overwhelmed by the discordant currents of their own reasonings, while they remain out of the safe haven of the Catholic faith, in order that they may learn to gather in the sails of their pride, which are filled with the evil gales of novelty, and to betake themselves again to the secure station of their serene and loving mother, and to rid themselves of the bitter errors which they have swallowed, and so to drink, in future, the streams of living water. Let them unlearn worthily what they unworthily learned, mastering the Church's doctrine as far as it is level to the reason, submitting where it is above it.

[How accurate a description is the above of many amiable persons of the present day, who, instead of a single and noble maintenance of Catholic truth, try to unite in their creed things incompatible, and are ever spoiling their own excellences by timidity, weakness, or presumption! Nay, how true a description is it of our Church itself, *not as it was intended to be*, but as it actually has become in these dark and secular days! Do not we hover about our ancient home, the home of Cyprian and Athanasius, without the heart to take up our abode in it, yet afraid to quit the sight of it; boasting of our Episcopacy, yet

unwilling to condemn separatism; claiming a descent from the Apostles, yet, doubting of the gifts attending it; and trying to extend the limits of the Church for the admission of Wesleyans and Presbyterians, while we profess to be exclusively primitive? Alas, is not this to witness against ourselves, like coward sinners who hope to serve the world, without giving up God's service!]

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5. (c. 27. 33. 34.)

"O Timothy," the Apostle says, "guard the deposit, shunning profane novelties of words!" . . . Who is Timothy in this day, but the Church universal, or, in particular, the whole body of its rulers, who ought both themselves to have and to teach others the sound inviolate knowledge of religious duty? What means "guard the deposit?" Guard it, he says, because of thieves, of enemies, lest, while men sleep, they sow tares upon that, good seed of wheat, which the Son of man has sown in His field. "Guard the deposit." What is the deposit? That which is committed to thee, not discovered by thee; what thou hast received, not struck out; a subject not of talent, but of instruction: not of private judgment, but of public tradition; that has come to thee, not from thee; in which thou shouldest display not originality, but safe custody; not as a master, but as a scholar, not as a leader, but a follower. "Guard the deposit." Preserve the talent of Catholic faith inviolate, entire. As thou hast received it, so let it remain with thee, so let it pass from thee. Gold thou hast received, be it gold that thou payest back. I will have no base coin palmed upon me, no shameless lead, no fraudulent brass, no outward seeming without the reality. O Timothy, priest, expositor, doctor, if a divine gift has made thee sufficient for these things, in ability, in practice, in learning, be thou the Bezaleel of the spiritual tabernacle, polish the precious stones of the divine word, set them with fidelity, embellish them with skill, add brilliancy, elegance, beauty; what was before believed obscurely, be it illustrated by thy exposition; what antiquity but darkly venerated, let posterity learn from thee to apprehend, ever remembering so to teach what thou hast learned, that the teacher be new, not the teaching. "Shunning profane

novelties of words." "Shun," he says, "as if a viper, or scorpion, or basilisk, whose very sight and breath—not touch only—may blast thee." Shun, in what way? "With such a one, no, not to eat." "If any one come to you, and bringeth not this doctrine;"—What doctrine, but the Catholic and universal, that one and the same doctrine remaining age after age by an incorrupt tradition of the truth, and ever so to remain on into everlasting ages? To proceed: "receive him not into your home, nor give him greeting; for he who gives him greeting. shares in his evil works." "*Profane* novelties of words;" that is, such as have nothing sacred or religious in them; such as are altogether outside the Church's shrine, which is the temple of God. "Novelties of *words;*" that is, of doctrines, subjects, statements, contrary to antiquity. If these be admitted, the creed of the Sainted Fathers must necessarily be violated, in whole or part; all believers of all ages, all the saints, all the religious brethren, and virgin sisters, all the clergy, Levites, and priests, so many thousand of Confessors, so many armies of martyrs, so many populous cities and countries, so many islands, provinces, kings, nations, kingdoms, families, nay almost the whole compass of the world, incorporated, as it is through the Catholic faith, into Christ the head, in so long a series of years, must necessarily be judged to have been ignorant, to have erred, to have blasphemed.

"Profane *novelties;*" such namely, as were never followed or admitted by Catholics, but by heretics ever. For in good sooth, when was there ever an heresy, which did not spring up under a certain designation, at a certain place, at a certain time? Who ever established a heresy, except he first separated himself from the accordant voice of Catholic universality and antiquity? The fact is clearer than day, as instances show. Who, before the profane Pelagius, ever claimed such power for the will, as to deny that the grace of God was necessary to aid it in the particular acts of obedience? Who, before his marvellous disciple Celestius, ever denied that the whole human race was brought under the guilt of Adam's sin? Who, before the blasphemer Arius, dared to divide in his creed the Unity

of the Trinity? Who, before the wretched Sabellius, to confuse the Trinity of the Unity? Who, before that cruel Novatian, ever taught that cruelty belonged to Him, who willeth not the death of him that dieth, but his turning and living? . . . Numberless other instances might be added, did space allow it; all of which plainly and clearly prove this one thing, as the peculiar and genuine mark of heresy, that it is novel, dislikes antiquity, and is wrecked by the captiousness of a pretended knowledge. On the other hand, it is almost the distinctive mark of a Catholic, that he keeps the trust and commission of the Holy Fathers, and condemns profane novelties, in accordance with the Apostle's repeated declarations, "If any one preach to you, what you have not already received, let him be anathema."

[There is this difficulty in applying the doctrine of this extract to these times, that the Church has forfeited in great measure its Catholicity; that is, in matter of fact, it *was* unanimous in its whole creed in Vincent's day, and it is not now. It now, alas! has one doctrine in Greece, another in Rome, a third in England, a fourth in Sweden. Moreover, since all of these cannot be true, error must have been admitted in some or other of its branches, an occurrence which Vincent never anticipated. He considers the Church to possess within it that principle of health and vigour, which expels heresies out of its system, without its suffering more than a temporary disarrangement from them. The state of things is altered now in matter of fact; though the Church of Rome attempts to deny it, by cutting off from the Catholic Church such branches as do not agree with itself. But this is arguing in a circle; for its members, after having cut off from them all who do not agree with them, maintain they are Catholic, because they all speak the same thing.

However, there is a true and sufficient sense in which Vincent's doctrine has been and ever will be fulfilled. In truth, he does not speak of *all* doctrine but of the "*foundations*," (as he terms them, c. 41,) of Christian doctrine. That the Church ever will teach these faithfully, is promised in Scripture (Isa. lix. 21.) and in matter of fact, it has taught them up to this day, has taught them over the whole world, whatever may be the quarrels and schisms of its branches. These fundamentals are contained in the creed, and have been expanded at various times by the Catholic Church acting together; such are the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the like; they have been held from the beginning, and to this day are taught in the east and west, north and south. Such too are many ordinances and usages of the Church.

Accordingly, in spite of our unhappy differences with Greece and Rome, we may say to the Socinian, after Vincent's manner, "We know *when* your doctrine first appeared, and it was protested against on its first appearance;" to the Baptist, "We can point to the very date *when* Infant Baptism was first denied:" to the Presbyterian, "We can prove the rejection of Episcopacy to be a *novelty*;" to the Zuinglian or Hoadleian, "We can trace the *history* of the denial of Sacramental grace; we know its rise, its course, its outbreaks, and its defeats;" and so with the rest.

Further, we may apply the argument against the Romanists themselves, unwilling as we are to speak harshly of them. We consider we can give the history of the corruptions in the Church, as well as of the heresies which went out of it. We can give the very year when image worship was first established, and show the opposition and protests made against it at the time. We can assign a date to the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Nay, we are willing to receive all doctrines which were in possession of the Church in the sixteenth century, except so far as we can show a time when they were not in possession.]

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6. (c. 35. 37.)

Here perhaps some one may ask, whether the heretics also do not make use of testimonies from Holy Scripture? Yes, indeed, they do use them, and lay great stress on them, for you may see them ready quoters of each book of God's Sacred Law,—the Books of Moses, of Kings, the Psalms, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Prophets. Whether indeed they are among their own people, or among strangers, in private or in public, discoursing or writing, at convivial meetings or in the open ways, they never at all advance any of their peculiar positions, without attempting to express it in Scripture language. Look at the treatises of Paul of Samosata, of Priscillian, of Eunomius, of Jovinian, and those other scourges of the Church; you will find an infinite heap of instances, so that scarcely a page occurs, which is not coloured by some perverted passages of Scripture, the Old or the New. But so much more are they to be avoided and dreaded, the more they skulk behind the cover of the Divine Law. For they know that the ill savour of heresy would scarce commend itself to any

one, if exhaled in its own simplicity; so they sprinkle it with the fragrance of a heavenly voice, that men who would be quick in rejecting human error, may be slow in despising Divine oracles.

Such were they whom the Apostle has stricken in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, saying, "Of this sort are false Apostles, deceitful workmen, transforming themselves into the Apostles of CHRIST." What is "transforming themselves into the Apostles of CHRIST?" This is meant by it. The Apostles adduced texts from the Divine Law, so did they; the Apostles brought authorities from the Psalms, so did they; the Apostles appealed to the Prophets, so did they quite as much. But when, what both parties had agreed in adducing, they differed in interpreting, then was the distinction seen between the innocent and the deceitful, the honest and the counterfeit, the true-hearted and the perverse, in a word, the true Apostles and the false Apostles. "And no wonder," he continues, "for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light; so that it is not a great thing that his ministers are transformed into ministers of righteousness." According then to St. Paul's teaching, as often as false apostles, or false prophets, or false doctors, pervert texts of Scripture into authorities for their errors, they are evidently following the crafty device of their father, who, we may be sure, would never adopt it, did he not well know that the pretence of Scripture texts is the most successful mode of insinuating impious doctrine.

Does any one ask, how we know that the devil is accustomed to quote Scripture? let him read the Gospels, in which it is written,—"Then the devil took Him up," that is, the LORD and SAVIOUR, "and placed Him on a pinnacle of the Temple, and said to Him, If Thou art the SON of GOD, cast Thyself down, *for it is written*, He hath given His angels charge of Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways." . . . We must especially heed and remember the doctrine contained in this passage, that, when we meet with men citing the words of Apostles or Prophets against the Catholic Faith, we may take it as a Gospel sanction for being quite certain, that the devil speaks by their mouth. . . . . If any

one of the heretics be asked, how he proves that we ought to abandon the universal and ancient faith of the Church Catholic, he will promptly reply, "It is written;" and on the spot is ready with a thousand texts and proofs, some from the Law, some from the Psalms, some from the Apostles, some from the Prophets; with the view of precipitating the unhappy soul, by a new and perverse interpretation of them, from the secure pinnacle of Catholicism into the gulf of heresy. Moreover, they add promises which wonderfully deceive incautious men. They dare to engage and to proclaim that in their Church, that is, in their own meeting, there is a certain great and special grace of God, belonging to each of them personally, so that without labour, or endeavour, or pains, without seeking, or asking, or knocking, all who belong to their number, are so divinely ordered, that carried up aloft by the hands of angels, they can never "strike their foot against a stone," that is, stumble in their Christian course.

[This warning is especially seasonable to us of this day, who are beset both with the clamour, that "the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants," and with a thousand discordant views, all professedly Scriptural, in illustration of its unreasonableness. We may simply say, "that interpretation shall be ours, which the Church has ever taught from the first day until now. The whole body of saints, speaking unanimously, must be sounder and more certain in their doctrine, than any of these upstart and self-authorized parties." If it be objected, that the Church Catholic at this day speaks different things; we may plainly deny this as regards the great points of faith, as above stated. Whatever be our private differences with the Roman Catholics, we may join with them in condemning Socinians, Baptists, Independents, Quakers, and the like. But God forbid, that we should ally ourselves with the offspring of heresy and schism, in our contest with any branches of the Holy Church, which maintain the foundation, whatever may be their incidental corruptions!]

7. (c. 28, 29, 30, 31.)

If it be asked, whether in saying that the Christian doctrine is immutable, I maintain that Divine doctrine can make no advance in the Church, let me answer at once that I maintain just the reverse. Who indeed is so niggardly towards mankind, so abandoned by God, as to try to forbid it? However, it must be such an advance as is truly an increase of the faith, not a change. That is, it is the property of an increase, that each particular part has its own developement; but of a change, that some part or other becomes what it was not before. Doubtless, then, there should be in successive ages an increase, a great and effective improvement, in the understanding, the knowledge, the wisdom of all Christians, and of each of them, of the individuals and of the whole Church, but only in the same form, that is, in the same doctrine, the same meaning, the same expression.

The soul should observe the same rule which obtains in the case of the body, which, in the course of years, unfolds itself into its perfect proportions, yet remains the same as before. Great as is the difference between the flower of boyhood and the maturity of old age, yet the very same individual who was a boy becomes aged, the change in state and habit of that one and the same being in no respect affecting the identity of his nature and his person. Children at the breast have small limbs, youths have large, yet the very same ones. Their number is the same, even though they might before be in part undeveloped. This, then, evidently is the legitimate and right rule of growth, the natural and beautiful order of advancing, if years bring out into shape those elements which Creative Wisdom had already implanted. If, however, a change were made in course of time into some type of a different species, or the number of the limbs increased or diminished, the whole body would necessarily fall to pieces, or become monstrous, or at least be enfeebled. So, in

like manner, let the one message of Christianity follow the laws of growth ; consolidated indeed by years, expanded, elucidated, but incorrupt for ever, and inviolate, and full and perfect in the entireness of its parts, of its members, (as it were,) and its senses, but with no alteration, no loss of its characteristic marks, no variety in its definition.

For instance : our ancestors sowed of old in this corn-field of the Church the seeds of true faith as of wheat. It were very wrong and unseemly that we their children should choose, instead of the genuine crop, the intrusive deceit of the tares. Rather, it is right and fitting that the first and the last should not differ from each other, but that the seed being wheat, the crop should be wheat also . . . God forbid that, in that Spiritual garden, the shoots of cinnamon and balsam should suddenly bear nettles or aconite. Whatever, then, divine husbandry and ancient faith have sown in our Church, must be cultivated and cherished by the diligence of posterity ; must flourish and grow to ripeness ; must advance and be perfected. It is pious to make accurate, to refine, to polish those primitive doctrines of heavenly philosophy ; it is impious to change them for others. Let them be made intelligible, luminous, distinct; but they ought ever to retain their completeness, their entireness, their characteristic nature.

For, should this license of impious deceit once be allowed, I shudder to think of the risk, which will follow, of the excision and destruction of religion. If but one portion of the Catholic doctrine be renounced, another, and then another, and then again others will be renounced also, as if by right and custom. Moreover, if the separate parts be repudiated, what is to hinder the whole being at length repudiated equally ? On the other hand, if new and old, foreign and native, profane and sacred, are once mingled together in any degree, this evil must necessarily extend to the whole, till nothing is left in the Church inviolate, nothing undefiled, the shrine of holy truth becoming the impure dwelling of impious and base errors. But, may God's pity avert this curse from the hearts of His people ; rather be it the recompense of the wicked !

[Alas! since the Church divided and spoke different things, what part of it is there which is not, in some respects, justly open to the description contained in these last words! How miserably contrasted are we with the One Holy Apostolic Church of old, which "serving with one consent," spoke "a pure language." And now that Rome has added, and we have omitted, in the catalogue of sacred doctrines, what is left to us but to turn our eyes sorrowfully and reverently to those ancient times, and with Bishop Ken, make it our profession to live and "die in the faith of the Catholic Church before the division of the East and West?"]

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